

WARRING SOCIETIES OF PRE-COLONIAL SOUTHEAST ASIA

Local Cultures of Conflict
Within a Regional Context



Edited by

Michael W. Charney and Kathryn Wellen

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COLONIAL SOUTHEAST ASIA

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Contents

Contributors xii

Introduction 1

Michael W. Charney (SOAS) and Kathryn Wellen (KITLV)

1. Warfare and Depopulation of the Trans-Mekong Basin and the Revival of Siam's Economy 21
Puangthong R. Pawakapan (Chulalongkorn University)
 2. La Maddukelleng and Civil War in South Sulawesi 47
Kathryn Wellen (KITLV)
 3. Kinship, Islam, and Raiding in Maguindanao, c. 1760–1780 73
Ariel C. Lopez (Leiden University)
 4. The Age of the Sea Falcons: Naval Warfare in Vietnam, 1771–1802 101
Vu Duc Liem (University of Hamburg)
 5. Expansion and Internalization of Modes of Warfare in Pre-colonial Bali 129
Hans Hägerdal (Linneaus University)
 6. Armed Rural Folk: Elements of Pre-colonial Warfare in the Artistic Representations and Written Accounts of the Pacification Campaign (1886–1889) in Burma 155
Michael W. Charney (SOAS)
 7. Military Capability and the State in Southeast Asia's Pacific Rimlands, 1500–1700 183
Gerrit Knaap (Huygens Institute for the History of the Netherlands)
- Bibliography* 201
- Index* 223

Maps and Figures

- 2.1 Map of Wajoq 50
- 3.1 Map of the Celebes Sea and surrounding islands 77
- 4.1 Image of *Mong Dong* warship taken from Nguyen imperial tripod
cauldrons in Hue 114
- 4.2. Image of seventeenth-century Tonkin warships, drawn by Samuel
Baron in the 1680s 118
- 4.3 Model of a Tayson warship in the Tayson Museum, Binh Dinh
Province 118
- 6.1 The taking of cattle as booty 172
- 6.2 The killing of non-combatants 173
- 6.3 The razing of a rural settlement 174
- 6.4 “Dacoits”, one of whom bears a flintlock, fleeing Indian cavalry 175

Table

- 1.1. Classification of population of the provinces of Phnom Penh and
Battambang in 1907 44

Contributors

▷ Michael W. Charney

Michael W. Charney (Ph.D., University of Michigan, 1999) is Professor of Asian and Military History at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, and formerly Project Professor with the Institute for Advanced Studies of the University of Tokyo. In 2003, he organized what remains the only workshop specifically focused on early modern warfare in Southeast Asia. This resulted in the publication of a special issue of *South East Asia Research* the following year, which he edited, on early modern warfare in Southeast Asia. He has written one of the core studies of early modern warfare across the Southeast Asian region (Brill, 2004) and numerous articles and chapters in edited books on both pre-modern Burmese warfare and river warfare in the Southeast Asian region (published in the *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, the *Journal of Asian History*, and elsewhere). Most recently, he is the author of “Precolonial Southeast Asian Military History”, for *Oxford Bibliographies Online* (Spring 2014). His other works include *Powerful Learning: Buddhist Literati and the Throne in Burma's Last Dynasty* (2006) and *A History of Modern Burma* (2009), as well as several co-edited volumes on Asian migrant societies.

▷ Hans Hägerdal

Dr Hans Hägerdal is Senior Lecturer at the Department of Cultural Sciences at Linneaus University, Sweden. Among his publications are *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects: Lombok and Bali in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (2001) and, as editor, *Responding to the West: Essays of Colonial Domination and Asian Agency* (2009). He has also authored a number of books on Vietnamese and Chinese history, *Vietnams Historia* (2005), *Kinas Historia* (2008), and *Kinas ledare 1912–2012* (2012). His latest book *Lords of the Land, Lords of the Sea: Conflict and Adaptation*

in *Early Colonial Timor, 1600–1800* (2012) is a comprehensive study of early Timorese history from original sources, published by KITLV Press.

▷ **Gerrit Knaap**

Professor Gerrit Knaap is Senior Researcher at Huygens Institute for the History of the Netherlands and Professor of Overseas and Colonial History at Utrecht University. He studied history and obtained his Ph.D. at Utrecht University. Previously, he held several positions in research and education, amongst others at Utrecht University, Free University Amsterdam, Leiden University and the Royal Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies. He was co-founder/secretary of the Foundation for the Oral History in Indonesia and initiator/creator of VOC-Kenniscentrum. His research interest concerns the history of the Netherlands in Asia, in particular during the colonial period. In this broad field he focuses on the interaction between Western and non-Western people, groups and institutions.

▷ **Ariel C. Lopez**

Mr Ariel C. Lopez is a faculty member at the Department of History, University of the Philippines, Diliman. He is finishing his dissertation on the political and religious history of north Sulawesi (Indonesia) at Leiden University, the Netherlands. He previously obtained undergraduate and graduate degrees in History at Leiden University as part of the Encompass/Cosmopolis programmes.

▷ **Puangthong R. Pawakapan**

Dr Puangthong R. Pawakapan is Associate Professor of Political Science at Chulalongkorn University in Thailand. Her work focuses on the political relationship between Thailand and Cambodia. She is the author of *State and Uncivil Society in Thailand at the Temple of Preah Vihear* (ISEAS, 2013).

▷ **Vu Duc Liem**

Mr Vu Duc Liem taught Vietnamese and Southeast Asian history at Hanoi National University of Education (HNUE), Vietnam. He received a B.A in history in 2008, an M.A. in Southeast Asian history in 2010 from Hanoi National University of Education, and a second M.A. degree in Southeast Asian Studies at Chulalongkorn University, Thailand, with a scholarship from the Rockefeller Foundation. He was also a

Graduate Fellow at the Asian Research Institute, National University of Singapore (2012). Since 2013, he has become a PhD candidate in Vietnamese history at Hamburg University. His publications have appeared in the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* (in Vietnamese), *Chinese Studies Review* (in Vietnamese), and *Rian Thai: Journal of Thai Studies*. His research focuses on Vietnamese historiography, imperial memorial system, and palace archives of the nineteenth century.

▷ **Kathryn Wellen**

Dr Kathryn Wellen (Ph.D., University of Hawai'i, 2003) was the first Western exchange student to Brunei Darussalam, a Fulbright scholar at University Malaya, an area specialist at the Library of Congress, and the librarian at the Royal (Netherlands) Institute for Southeast Asian Studies. She currently works as a historian for the Royal (Netherlands) Academy of Arts and Sciences. She is the author of *The Open Door: Early Modern Wajorese Statecraft and Diaspora*, published by Northern Illinois University Press in 2014.

Introduction

Michael W. Charney and Kathryn Wellen

The historiography on European military encounters with the Americas, Asia, and Africa has long overshadowed that on warfare between non-Western societies. Twentieth-century Western military arrogance meant that in much scholarship non-Westerners were viewed as culturally, technologically, and sometimes even physically, unequal to the challenge of modern warfare. Contradictory evidence, such as the Vietnam War, was accounted for as examples of political betrayal back home. Alternatively, the military victories of non-Westerners might simply be ignored because they were incompatible with the reigning European register of “racial conflict”, as James Belich (1986) has shown in his analysis of the New Zealand Wars.¹ In more recent decades, the great impact of Geoffrey Parker’s (1988) thesis on the military revolution that demonstrated why Europeans had succeeded in conquering the globe over the course of the early modern period kept historiography focused on the West.² Nevertheless, as contemporary scholarship is increasingly de-centring world or global history away from Europe and the North Atlantic, scholars who revisit earlier centuries of the non-Western world find in the documents and archives of Europe and China that the martial prowess of non-Western societies glorified in indigenous chronicles, oral traditions, and even puppet theatre was taken very seriously by Europeans before the late nineteenth century.

This recent academic interest is actually a revival of earlier interest that had practical motivations. In the sixteenth century, Europeans were

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1. James Belich, *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 1986).
 2. Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

very conscious of the need to understand warfare locally and for much of the earlier part of the European military encounter with Asia and Africa there was good reason to do so, for both sides competed on a relatively equal footing. As scholars of Asian warfare have demonstrated, early modern Asian states had the resources, military, human, and administrative, to compete effectively on the battlefield or on water with Europeans.³ They were able to maintain parity well into the early nineteenth century as they underwent their own versions of state formation including the “rise of modern, bureaucratically organized armies and navies”.⁴ Nor were technological differences crucial. This is clearly exemplified by the development of the sixteenth-century harquebus that, while undeniably representing an important phase in European military technological development, was in fact quite clumsy and ineffective; it took a long time to reload, the noise of its positioning and operation gave warning to its targets, and it depended upon gunpowder that, in moist tropical environments, frequently became unusable. The absence of a clear advantage in anything less than ideal circumstances inspired Europeans to attempt to understand local warfare traditions on their own terms. It was also the case that outside of Europe, after the first hundred years of Iberian imperial expansion, especially at sea, Europeans largely fought each other and when they fought, it was mainly over the control of trade routes and strategic positions on them. As a result, between the huge volume of accounts of Western and indigenous combat of the sixteenth century and the wars of conquest in the nineteenth century in North America, Africa, and Asia, European thinking on warfare abroad focused on how to vanquish other Europeans, from the decks of their

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3. Michael W. Charney, “Shallow-draft Boats, Guns, and the Aye-ra-wa-ti: Continuity and Change in Ship Structure and River Warfare in Precolonial Myanmar”, *Oriens Extremus* 40.1 (1997): 16–63; Laichen Sun, “Military Technology Transfers from Ming China and the Emergence of Northern Mainland Southeast Asia (c. 1390–1527)”, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 34.3 (2003): 248–73; Tonio Andrade, “Late Medieval Divergences: Comparative Perspectives on Early Gunpowder Warfare in Europe and China”, *Journal of Medieval Military History* 13 (2015): 247–76; Idem, *The Gunpowder Age: China, Military Innovation, and the Rise of the West in World History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).
 4. Gayl D. Ness & William Stahl, “Western Imperialist Armies in Asia”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 19.1 (January, 1977): 27.

ships, and not how to defeat the various indigenous armies somewhere beyond the treeline behind the beaches.

European considerations of non-Western warfare were slow to rekindle, but new confrontations with indigenous states and armies rapidly escalated from about the 1820s. This was partly due to the effects of the industrial revolution and political centralization in Europe and North America that brought together both the need for resources and the ability in terms of military projection and lift that would prompt a new era of Western warfare and colonial conquests abroad. The course of the nineteenth century saw increasingly frequent, if inconsistent, signs that Asian and African armies alike were competing with European forces less favourably in the past. There were admittedly shocking setbacks such as the Plains Indians' defeat of Lt. Colonel George Armstrong Custer at the Battle of Little Bighorn (25–26 June 1876) and the defeat of a large British formation by a Zulu force armed with iron spears and cow-hide shields at the Battle of Isandlwana (22 January 1879). These defeats, however, became opportunities to emphasize moral qualities that Westerners attributed to themselves that legitimated their wars of expansion. Western commanders who fought to the death were treated less as military failures than as martyrs for the cause of the march of civilization.

But serious Western interest in the indigenous warfare of other parts of the world declined. Western military theorists were arguably self-satisfied with colonial warfare doctrine, which for the French, to take one example, had developed on the cumulative basis of experience in North Africa, French Indochina, and Madagascar, as it had evolved by the end of the nineteenth century. It was often assumed that Western armies were so far advanced militarily that indigenous forces would be unable to fight effectively against them. As Gayl D. Ness and William Stahl (1977) have argued, two key advantages enjoyed by Western militaries were state backing and their organizational flexibility. The first was most significant when coupled with military and transportation technology that enabled lift and power projection overseas and proto-bureaucratic state institutions could come into play to support such efforts. Such institutions while not absent in the non-Western world faced a steep learning curve in their attempts to benefit from the resources afforded

by the Industrial Revolution in the West.⁵ The second element allowed Western militaries to quickly adapt to local conditions of warfare that made victory possible against non-Western states and peoples. The fall of most non-Western states to Western arms by the early twentieth century also encouraged adaptation to the Western military model among those non-Western states that remained, including Siam, Japan, China and a few others. This last handful of extra-Western states reshaped their militaries along Western lines in the context of the increasing cost of war. The effect of European expansion and Asian attempts at military replication effectively bifurcated warfare into two generalized categories each with the development of peculiar tactics, strategies, technology, and vocabularies. The first included the kind of modern warfare that would be waged in possible contests with Western and Westernized military machines. The second consisted of what was characterized as the backward (often referred to as “traditional”) warfare waged by various popular insurgencies that broke out in the colonial world to challenge Western rule.

The wave of national revolutions across the colonial world beginning in the early post-war period sustained the existing bifurcation between Western and non-Western warfare, although the Cold War era insurgent would be increasingly better armed than their colonial-era counterparts. As both the West and the Communist Bloc provided arms, advisors, training, and ideologies to African, Asian, Middle Eastern, and Latin American combatants, warfare everywhere no longer appeared to be solely dependent on the stage of social or technological development at which a society was. Instead, the scale of war and the weaponry used was determined by economy and environmental context, such as the struggle between poor peasants versus well-funded state armies (often superpower proxies) and, often, the politicization of either, for example ideologically informed strategies such as the protracted warfare of Mao

5. Ness & Stahl, “Western Imperialist Armies in Asia”. See the example of the effort by the Vietnamese state to replicate a Western steam engine in the nineteenth century by carving a solid boiler out of wood in Alexander Woodside, *Vietnam and the Chinese Model: A Comparative Study of Nguyen and Ch’ing Civil Government in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century* (Harvard: Harvard East Asian Studies, 1988). Nevertheless, the Vietnamese effort here did such on the second attempt in 1840. See Nguyen The Anh, “Traditional Vietnam’s Incorporation of External and Cultural and Technical Contributions: Ambivalence and Ambiguity”, *Southeast Asian Studies* 40.4 (2003): 454, n. 12.

Zedong applied by the Vietnamese to their struggles with the French and then the Americans.

Although the impressions of warfare inherited from the colonial and Cold War eras lingered into the twenty-first century, with the cultural challenge posed to Western armies in the Middle East and elsewhere, there has been a rekindling of interest in the pervasive influence of non-Western forms of warfare. But contemporary military necessity has not been the only attraction. This return has coincided with changing historiographical treatments of modernity that have included increasing efforts by scholars of non-Western societies to reveal local pasts. The global need for this reconsideration has been voiced very eloquently by Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000), who has argued for the view of a multi-centred modernity in which Europe was not the main centre but merely one of many such centres however much its siblings were obscured by Western dominated discourses emerging out of the Enlightenment.⁶ Until recently, efforts to rediscover indigenous history have lacked the confidence to present local societies as generative centres on par with Europe and have struggled to demonstrate why it was necessary to study one region or another at all. In the case of Southeast Asia, the first generation or so of these general efforts at regional studies had to legitimize the value of local study by demonstrating that the region had culture and history different from that of China and India and hence deserved attention in its own right. This effort is represented by a host of scholars of the 1970s and after.⁷ For example, John Smail's seminal essay "On the Possibility of an Autonomous History of Modern Southeast Asia" challenged Eurocentric historiographies of Southeast Asia by addressing historians' viewpoints and attitudes as well as the relative importance of various actors in any given history. Reid's two-volume work *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce* sought to define Southeast Asia on its own terms through the examination of countless details ranging from sexual mores to economics.⁸ Groundbreaking when published, these works changed the way scholars look at historical Southeast Asia. It now

6. Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

7. John R. W. Smail, "On the Possibility of an Autonomous History of Modern Southeast Asia", *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 2.2 (1961): 72–102.

8. Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450–1680*, 2 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988, 1993).

goes without saying that the region has distinct cultural characteristics that influenced its history. Thus in this volume, we examine the ways in which Southeast Asia's culture influenced its military history, both directly through culturally-specific military practices and indirectly through cultural influences on the politics of warfare.

The task of undoing the broad generalizations of the twentieth century, formed by soldiers, statesmen, and scholars alike, is daunting for two reasons. First of all these generalizations are naturally embedded in how the warfare of the time was viewed and recorded in documentation, histories, and images. Second, and more damaging, was that this period also saw the production of nearly all of the secondary research on pre-twentieth-century warfare in the region. However, the obvious solution of turning back to pre-twentieth-century documentation and images is prone to its own pitfalls. As with twentieth-century documentation, pre-twentieth-century sources also contain the stamp of their own era and culture. For example, European sources were prone to exaggerate the exoticness of the non-Western world as was the case of Mendes Pinto's *Peregrination*.⁹ Similarly, early modern indigenous sources from Southeast Asia were apt to present a picture of themselves in universal ways as well, as part of the Buddhist world or Dar al-Islam, and this equally obscured local particularism. Nevertheless, the range of primary source material made available in the last decade to complement, rather than replace, the traditional canon has made it both easier and timely to reconsider the varieties of warfare in the region as opposed to an essentialized warfare of the region. New sources consist of not only recently translated East Asian documents but also and particularly new research and new interpretations of indigenous documentation.

Reconceptualizing warfare in the region has been a continuously challenging endeavour. Colonial historiography viewed indigenous warfare through a racial lens, traceable to late-nineteenth-century Europe, that obscured actual practices and portrayed indigenous warfare in a deroga-

9. On an earlier debate regarding Pinto's veracity, see the discussion by Rebecca D. Catz in the introduction to her translation of his travels in Fernão Mendes Pinto, *The Travels of Mendes Pinto*, edited and translated by Rebecca D. Catz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989). More recent scholarship has attempted to view Pinto as a more useful source than previously granted.

tory way.¹⁰ Post-war historiography has slowly but steadily challenged colonial analyses although war studies as a discipline remains largely Eurocentric,¹¹ thereby diluting to some degree the methodological and documentary advances that have been made since independence. Early attempts to correct Eurocentric historiography on warfare in this region were necessarily eclectic.¹² Although histories of indigenous warfare in component parts of modern South East Asia have early roots, the modern historiography of warfare of South East Asia as a region did not begin until the publication of H. G. Quaritch Wales' ground-breaking and multi-disciplinary work, *Ancient South East Asian Warfare* in 1952.¹³ Quaritch Wales, celebrated today for his work on the art treasures of the region, was a man of many talents and, having a foot both in and outside academia, he drew widely upon different kinds of sources and approaches to provide an overall picture of a region whose official regionality he observed in its making. The term "Southeast Asia" was first used to designate Lord Louis Mountbatten's South East Asian Command during World War II, just eight years before the publication of *Ancient South East Asian Warfare*, and it came into common parlance thereafter.

Quaritch Wales' contribution, while pioneering and important, remains problematic. It was part of a large approach to knowledge about Asia that succumbed to a discourse that Edward Said's classic

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10. James Belich, *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict*: 330.
 11. Richard J. Reid, *Warfare in African History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012): x.
 12. This is true of African historiography on warfare as well, with early publications focusing on particular ethnic groups or sub-regions of Africa, for example, Ade Ajayi, J. F., *Yoruba Warfare in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964); Joseph P. Smaldone, *Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate: Historical and Sociological Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977); and R. S. Smith, *Warfare and Diplomacy in Pre-Colonial West Africa* (London: James Currey, 1989). Only recently have broad surveys, such as Reid (2012) cited above, been written on warfare on the continent as a whole. Other recent efforts in this regard include Bruce Vandervort, *Wars of Imperial Conquest in Africa 1830–1914* (London: UCL Press, 1998); John K. Thornton, *Warfare in Atlantic Africa 1500–1800* (London: UCL Press, 1999); and William Reno, *Warfare in Independent Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
 13. H. G. Quaritch Wales, *Ancient South-East Asian Warfare* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1952).

essay identified as Orientalism.¹⁴ As Patrick Porter (2009) has shown, European discourse on non-Western societies reimagined Asian warfare in exotic ways that intellectually and administratively facilitated their management after conquest. These ways included the development of concepts such as “martial races” with which the British, for example, used Indians to suppress other Indians.¹⁵ Within different colonial societies, European and indigenous western-educated scholars had produced a number of studies of pre-colonial armies along these lines and some of this work continued after independence as historians at European universities and sometimes the same colonial scholars themselves, who had relocated back to the metropolitan universities, continued this kind of work into the 1950s and 1960s, often utilizing major university collections of Southeast Asian warfare paraphernalia held in Leiden, Paris, or London. Such work produced particular images of the main royal armies of the past and ultimately explained, through assertions of recruitment problems, poor management of manpower, backward military stratagems and tactics, problematic application of firearms, or weaknesses in drill, the reasons why these armies necessarily failed when faced with European arms.¹⁶ The products of this colonial labour would ironically form the basis of some of the early nationalist historiography that would blend these explanations with the romanticized glory of popular historical novels, in Burma for example, and accounts of kings and battles in the royal chronicles.

Like the larger orientalist project regarding Asia, Quaritch Wales’ work was unconsciously, but nonetheless profoundly essentializing, on a regional scale. It admitted no problem with throwing classical texts from one society in together with anthropological work of the 1950s on other societies and weaving them together to form a singular view of the region. Although Quaritch Wales clearly recognized that foreign influences were present, such as in the Sanskrit manuals of war trans-

14. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

15. Patrick Porter, *Military Orientalism: Eastern War through Western Eyes* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

16. Some of the works along these lines include “Javanese War and its Consequences” (Chapter Two) in B. Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies: Selected Writings of B. Schrieke, Part Two, Ruler and Realm in Early Java* (The Hague: W. van Hoeve Ltd, 1957): 121–52; R. R. Langham-Carter, “The Burmese Army”, *Journal of the Burma Research Society* 27.3 (1937): 254–76.

lated into Thai that he used as evidence for indigenous state warfare, he was a progenitor of the autonomous history of Southeast Asia school. Like Jacob Cornelis Van Leur, whose 1930s work *Indonesian Trade and Society* greatly influenced Smail's previously mentioned work,¹⁷ Quaritch Wales attempted to give Southeast Asia a regional insularity, informed by a shared culture that would not be changed by either time or by state. Since the publication of Quaritch Wales's work, scholars who have attempted to understand the history of Southeast Asian warfare have identified different drivers for change, but they have rarely challenged the regional nature of this warfare beyond the much discussed and accepted distinction between large interior societies and the coastal societies of the maritime world. Moreover, as the study of non-Western warfare has advanced considerably and examinations of Southeast Asian warfare have been included in transregional studies of ever-increasing scale, local nuance and variations within the region have received less focused attention in the general historiography on warfare.¹⁸

The present collection of essays is directed at bringing an acceptance of the diversity within Southeast Asian warfare back to the academic table. Their contribution to the historiography on warfare is arguing, like Wales, for a cultural approach to warfare in the region. However, the present approach is one that abandons the notion of regionality, arguing instead for a new and particular take to local culture and accepting the clear internal diversity of societies in the region. Before articulating this approach, however, it is necessary to outline in brief the various historiographical approaches that have been applied to warfare in the region since Quaritch Wales' time. In this regard, it is important to keep in mind that the study of warfare in the region has never been a dense historiographical field. The scholars who populated it were occasionally interested in warfare, but rarely situated warfare at the centre of their research interests. This has been partly a function of the dominance of area studies in Southeast Asian historiography, which emphasized comprehensive understandings of society, language, and culture as a means to understand the region and thus encouraged

17. J. C. Van Leur, *Indonesian Trade and Society: Essays in Asian social and Economic History* (The Hague-Bandung: W. van Hoeve, 1955).

18. For example, Kenneth Warren Chase, *Firearms: A Global History to 1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Alfred W. Crosby, *Throwing Fire: Projectile Technology through History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

broad interests when it came to research. Much of the best work on Southeast Asian warfare has been by scholars who might normally be viewed more properly as religious studies scholars, art historians, and historians of gender, rather than as military historians per se. Second, the overall lower numbers of scholars working on Southeast Asian history than, say, the numbers of scholars working on any particular century of European or Chinese history required an obligation for a broad remit to research work simply to sustain the history of the Southeast Asian region as a field of study. The cumulative effect of both the broad research interests encouraged and the extensive research obligations shouldered has meant that the historiography on Southeast Asian warfare is often subject to more direct scholarly interventions, as this work has also been especially quick to incorporate new ideas drawn from other disciplines and related work.

Nevertheless, as eclectic as the historiography of warfare in Southeast Asia has been, it can be divided into several general angles that we will refer to here as approaches. These approaches do not represent stages; there is a rough chronology to their appearance, but they overlap and complement each other considerably. The earliest and most long-lived approach has been the aforementioned *old* cultural approach, which was established by Quaritch Wales and further developed by Reid and Leonard Andaya, among others. This approach holds that Southeast Asian culture, more than any other factor, determined the ways that wars were fought. This work viewed indigenous culture as a force that shaped technology or its application, rather than the reverse, over the course of the early modern period. Southeast Asians were assumed to be averse to killing and hence developed tactics and responses to war that avoided bloodshed as much as possible. This claim is perhaps the most widely cited feature of Southeast Asian warfare in the general historiography on warfare. Another commonly cited feature of Southeast Asian warfare in military historical literature is the importance of people. Even the application of new military technology, such as cannon, was not immune to culture's touch from the perspective of this school. While small allowances were made for differences in the mainland and island worlds to explain particular issues, overall this school has not explained wide differences in the ways warfare was fought in the region. In a region where warfare is viewed to be culturally determined, this approach has

not explained why there is so great divergence across the region in its actual historical experience with warfare.

The old cultural approach was eventually joined by the state formation approach. Modelled by historians such as Victor B. Lieberman, M. C. Ricklefs, and Pamaree Surakiat, a number of scholars see war as a reflection of broader processes emanating from changes in the economy and the trajectory of state formation and its consequences.¹⁹ Amongst the more important contributing factors was the impact of the introduction of firearms, in particular those of the Portuguese and Europeans who followed. The state formation approach, however effective at explaining the scale of warfare and war-making capacity could not be expected to explain why comparable states, such as Ava in northern Burma in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and the polities of South Sulawesi during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, manifested warfare with very clear differences in martial culture and concepts of war. This approach also favours in its analysis lowland states, those that have left rich archival records, at the expense of highland societies or those societies in the lowlands not yet absorbed by what James Scott terms expanding state space, terrain that is easily managed by the state.²⁰ Conversely, the problem of including highland societies and lowland areas without rich archival records, and often societies historically documented through oral traditions, is that the latter tend to be inclusive, flexible, and adaptive, progressively changing the record to suit contemporary needs.²¹ In both cases, local warfare of a particular era becomes increasingly faint as court sources (or later,

19. Victor B. Lieberman, *Strange Parallels: Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800–1830*, Vol. 1, *Integration of the Mainland*; Vol. 2: *Mainland Mirrors: Europe, Japan, China, South Asia, and the Islands* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003–2009); Idem, “Some Comparative Thoughts on Premodern Southeast Asian Warfare”, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 46.2 (2003): 215–25; M. C. Ricklefs, *War, Culture and Economy in Java, 1677–1726: Asian and European Imperialism in the Early Kartasura period* (Sydney: Asian Studies Association of Australia in Association with Allen and Unwin, 1993); Pamaree Surakiat, “The Changing Nature of Conflict between Burma and Siam as seen from the growth and development of Burmese states from the 16th to the 19th centuries”, ARI Working Paper, No. 64 (March 2006) [http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/docs/wps/wps06_064.pdf].

20. James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009): 48.

21. Ibid., 230.

state sources) encourage a court imaginary of warfare or depict an increasingly nationalized picture of antecedent warfare and the armies involved and as highland societies depict that warfare in ways that reflect contemporary perceptions. When examined in their own time with contemporary documents and an extensive knowledge of the local terrain and culture, historians such as John Whitmore (2004) and John Fernquest (2006) have suggested in earlier work that local, immediate experience was more influential to indigenous military developments than some of the classical texts to which historians of warfare in the region often conventionally turn.²²

Inspired by earlier calls within the region, admittedly prompted by nationalist historiography, to challenge the technological edge conventionally ascribed to the Europeans in the region from the sixteenth century,²³ scholars began to re-emphasize the importance of military technology that emerged from within Asia. Michael W. Charney (1997) argued that Asian military technologies fared well against the Europeans, especially on water and Sun Laichen (2003) drew attention to the Chinese origins of the gunpowder revolution in the region.²⁴ Together, these scholars and other historians prompted the emergence of the technology approach that argued that technological change and adaptation was the driving force for changes in warfare. As Christopher E. Goscha (2003) has observed, this approach has helped to find the “historical connections and exchanges” that were lost within nationalist

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22. See Whitmore's comments on his weighing of the possible influence of Tran Quoc Tuan's thirteenth-century treatise, the Binh Thu Yeu Luoc, as opposed to immediate influence of experience in Vietnamese fighting with Ming and Tai forces in late fifteenth Century Vietnam in John K. Whitmore, “The Two Great Campaigns of the Hong-duc Era (1470–97) in Dai Viet”, *South East Asia Research* 12, 1 (2004): 119–36. As Fernquest observes, the most important challenge obstructing the larger hegemonic states in terms of warfare in fifteenth-century Burma were localities and their autonomy, requiring bespoke military strategies to bring them under control. See Jon Fernquest, “Rajadhirat's Mask of Command: Military Leadership in Burma (c. 1438–1421)”, *SOAS Bulletin of Burma Research* 4.1 (Spring 2006): 21.
23. See for example Sudjoko's *Ancient Indonesian Technology: Ship Building and Firearms Production in the Sixteenth Century* (Jakarta:
24. Charney, “Shallow-draft Boats, Guns, and the Aye-ra-wa-ti”, 16–63; Sun, “Military Technology Transfers from Ming China and the Emergence of Northern Mainland Southeast Asia”, 248–73.

and regionalist historical paradigms.²⁵ Nevertheless, this approach has been too dependent upon a single actor and cannot explain why two societies that had guns saw them apply the same technology in different ways in war and with very different results. Of the three main approaches outlined in brief above, none are able, on their own, to offer an explanation for the great historical diversity of warfare across the region.

In the past decade or so, there has been a broader, global historiographical shift in approaches to non-Western warfare that Jeremy Black has referred to as the cultural turn in warfare studies. Black has warned, however, that cultural concepts change over time and can exist simultaneously and indeed can even contradict one another in the same society.²⁶ Rather than presenting a singular, regionally-shaped, culturally-determinist approach to warfare, we are instead embracing the diversity within the region, broadening our attention to include more localized perspectives.

As the chapters of the present book demonstrate, local Southeast Asian societies had their own individual experiences that were unique. The contributors to the volume focus on the relationship between particular warfare cultures and politics, the latter shaped by both local and regional factors. Environment, demographics, the prevailing trade patterns, religion, culture, the legacies of administrative experimentation, and a host of other factors made holding particular societies together and the acquisition of resources difficult in different ways. Particular martial cultures emerged in this context as did the political aspirations of warring rulers. Looked at broadly over the course of decades and centuries, all societies sought the same things in war such as resources, which in Southeast Asia often meant people, prestige, and political stability. Looked at closely, however, local conflicts across the region were waged in different ways, by different means, and with particular goals in each conflict. Beneath the generalities the historiography often focuses

25. Christopher E. Goscha, "Foreign Military Transfers in Mainland Southeast Asian Wars: Adaptations, Rejections and Change (Introduction)", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 34, 3 (2003): 492.

26. See the Preface to, as well as Chapter 1 in, Jeremy Black, *War and the Cultural Turn* (Cambridge: Polity, 2012). This literature has sought to avoid technological determinism, on the one hand, and keeping warfare within its social context, on the other. Wayne E. Lee, "Introduction", in Wayne E. Lee (ed.), *Warfare and Culture in World History* (New York: New York University Press, 2011): 2.

upon, there existed a vastly diverse terrain populated by conflicts, warriors, and goals whose unevenness indicates that while this warfare might be occurring in an interconnected region with comparable culture, that warfare and martial culture moved according to its own rhythm at the local level.

Nevertheless, this local experience is only half of the story, the other half being that provided by their cumulative whole, for the region still moved along through the history at an unequal speed but still discernibly similar trajectory, especially regarding the availability of firearms, the growth and decline of regional commerce, and the progress of statebuilding. The present editors have been drawn to the concept of a “composite cultural approach” that Kwasi Konadu (2010) has applied to African diasporic history in the Americas to describe the present approach to the history of warfare in Southeast Asia, one that situates dynamism in indigenous warfare culture in both local and regional historical experience, often prompted and shaped by political crisis.²⁷ The editors believe that the contributions included in this volume represent examples of this composite cultural approach, what might be described as a *new* cultural approach to warfare to distinguish it from earlier work on the culture of warfare in the region.

Part of the emphasis on the local experience of warfare is a conscious effort to put lowland and highland, Java and outer islands, and “centre” and “periphery” on as equal a historiographical footing as possible in depicting warfare in Southeast Asia. By doing so, we attempt to “save” warfare of particular times and places in pre-colonial Southeast Asia from the state, the nation, or one or another tourist site or museum exhibition devoted to lowland or highland warriors and how they are *supposed* to have looked by viewing local warfare on its own terms. Nevertheless, bridging the documentary divides within the region, those that have left rich, written, conventional documentary records and those for which the historian has to rely more heavily upon oral and illustrative materials, is no easy task. It requires juxtaposing different categories of sources, reading between the lines, teasing information out from the corners of illustrations, and a range of other approaches. The difficulties of overcoming the historiographical divide between coverage of lowlands and

27. Kwasi Konadu, *The Akan Diaspora in the Americas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

highlands are so deeply entrenched in the historiography that they cannot be resolved here. A number of the contributions in this volume, for example, examine warfare in the outer islands as opposed to Java which reflects a long-standing orientation of scholarship on warfare in the region; an orientation which, incidentally, reverses the general tendency in Indonesian studies to accord more attention to Java and Bali and less to regions further east.²⁸

We hope that pushing individual analyses of warfare in the region closer to local contexts, in communication with overall regional historical change, is a step in the right direction and encourages future work in a similar vein. In this respect, the disparate findings are welcome. For example, Hans Hägerdal's chapter in this volume contends that the use of modern weaponry may have intensified endemic unrest in Bali whereas Kathryn Wellen's chapter suggests that, at least in Wajoq, the presence of weapons may have facilitated political centralization. We also benefit from existing historiography within the region, particularly that focused on the highland societies of the mainland and the outer islands of the Indonesian Archipelago, which have left useful case studies of small population groups in small-scale polities that have reflected upon the nature of local culture, society, and warfare. Such work sought to use warfare to gain a deeper understanding of local societies, although the scholars who produced it were less concerned about how this work changed overall perspectives on warfare in the region per se. Perhaps because they were not driven by the latter agenda, their work is indirectly pioneering for our approach here.²⁹

Our first chapter, Puangthong R. Pawakapan's "Warfare and Depopulation of the Trans-Mekong Basin and the Revival of Siam's Economy", focuses on the resource motivations of one of the major lowland kingdoms of the region in response to economic changes that threatened to destabilize the relationship between the court and local political elites. Warfare in this case was directed at expanding the labour system and intensifying royal control over populations in the central mainland and

28. A notable exception to this tendency is Leonard Y. Andaya's *The Heritage of Arung Palakka: A History of South Sulawesi (Celebes) in the Seventeenth Century* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981).

29. For example, Barbara Watson Andaya, "History, Headhunting and Gender in Monsoon Asia: Comparative and Longitudinal Views", *South East Asia Research* 12, 1 (2003): 13–52.

Siam's eastward expansion. She argues that these efforts were intended to help compensate for the financial setbacks that resulted from the abandonment of the royal monopoly system. By considering these efforts alongside the eastward expansion that was intended to rebuild Siamese state power after 1767, she demonstrates how forced migrations changed the relative military, geographic and economic strengths of warring states and could be considered a kind of warfare in and of themselves. Deportation and depopulation, she contends, were more effective than armed conflict as a means of shifting the balance of power.

Two of our chapters, those by Kathryn Wellen and Ariel C. Lopez, focus on conflicts in different islands in the eastern archipelago and reveal how, within this corner of Southeast Asia, major differences in the relationship between warfare and politics, culture, religion, and society had emerged at different points in the early modern period. Wellen's chapter "La Maddukelleng and Civil War in South Sulawesi" uses the example of the Pénéki War to show how the complex, multi-layered political landscape in South Sulawesi lent itself to frequent conflicts between the various polities. Warfare was one of several means of adjusting the balance of power within the kaleidoscope of Bugis polities in South Sulawesi; other means included deliberation and treaties. While warfare was a regular feature of Bugis political life, the small scale, even the personal level, on which it was sometimes fought, suggests that it fulfilled a cultural role as well.

Lopez's chapter, "Kinship, Islam, and Raiding in Maguindanao, c. 1760–1780", examines a series of maritime raids emanating from the southern Philippines and how they were used as a means of state consolidation. In his study, the two crucial factors were religion and family, both social affiliations, but they served as the basis for the formation of trans-local political identities of varying effectiveness. As Lopez shows, the willingness to prepare for war could be a consequence of confidence in political stability at the local level. He presents the case of the Raja of Manganitu who was so confident in family-based alliances that he thrice refused to build defences against the kinds of raids common in the seas north of Sulawesi.

How far Southeast Asian states were able to innovate and revolutionise warfare to achieve political success through military contest is examined in Vu Duc Liem's chapter "Warfare, Politics of Space and Unification in

late Eighteenth-Century Vietnam.” The chapter also emphasizes how much particular kinds of warfare could be a political choice rather than an unavoidable consequence of the surrounding environment. As most of the chapters in the present volume demonstrate, rulers made choices about whether or not to employ military means to achieve their goals. The means chosen by different political competitors within late eighteenth-century Vietnam to decide their fate was naval power. Naval warfare has often been associated in the historiography with the conflict in the island world. Identifying its importance in Vietnam helps to highlight it as one of the common elements of warfare in the region. This attention also affords Southeast Asia a different position within the historiography on non-western warfare than, say, the pre-colonial Americas or sub-Saharan Africa for which it is almost exclusively focused on fighting on land. By contrast to the areas examined by Wellen, Lopez, and Hägerdal, however, Vietnamese states had the resources to reinvent their militaries on a scale that was not replicated by any late pre-colonial state in the archipelago. When the struggle for controlling Vietnam was over, the victorious Nguyen were able to step away again from the military revolution they had undertaken. Vu Duc Liem demonstrates for example that when the military struggles within Vietnam were over, and the Nguyen Court emerged victorious, it soon turned its back on naval power.

Hans Hägerdal’s chapter “Expansion and Internalization of Modes of Warfare in Pre-colonial Bali” also links political and military developments. As in the cases of Wellen’s and Lopez’s chapters, Hägerdal’s attention is focused on alliances. He argues that these alliances were sometimes a more effective political tool in warfare than technological excellence. Part of the motivation for warfare was the acquisition of human captives who could be sold for profit, as was the case of the raids examined by Lopez, but in the case of Bali warfare was also expansive, making the goals of Balinese warfare unique in late pre-colonial Indonesia.

In his closing comments, Hägerdal ruminates on the debates over the nature of political power within Bali and the relationships between the rajas, on the one hand, and village leaders on the other, making stable central political control difficult to assert and hold and suggesting a decentralized political terrain. In their own way, each of the area examined by the contributors to this volume experienced the significant tensions between trans-local rulers and the local populations they ruled, wished

to rule, or sought alliance with. The chapter by Charney, “Armed Rural Folk: Elements of Pre-colonial Warfare in the Artistic Representations and Written Accounts of the Pacification Campaign (1886–1889) in Burma”, pulls pre-colonial Burma out of a court-centred perspective to highlight the importance of these tensions there as well, shows how the nature of Burmese court sources has the effect of obstructing this importance, and identifies local data that raises questions about how pre-colonial warfare in Burma has been described in past historiography. In Charney’s view, small-scale warfare dominated the terrain of conflict in Burma just as it did in most other areas of the region. Charney argues that differences between “state warfare” as a court-created imaginary masked the fact that state campaigns were in practice a collective mobilization and projection abroad of the village-level culture of war. The continuity of what might best be termed “village warfare” was due to the limited penetration of the early modern Burmese state on village society and the former’s reliance on a small elite, standing army during times of peace.

Our closing chapter Gerrit Knaap’s “Military Capability and the State in Southeast Asia’s Pacific Rimlands, 1500–1700” examines historical practices of warfare on the Pacific border of Southeast Asia, in areas such as Sulu and Maluku that have often escaped the attention of comparative military historians. Knaap looks sub-region by sub-region at varied stages of economic and political development, the relationship between rulers and warriors, and the varieties of weapons in use. The chapter also highlights the importance of manpower to warfare as well as controlling people as a motivation for warfare. While the style and contents of Knaap’s chapter differ considerably from the other chapters, it presents valuable descriptions of warfare in less-commonly studied regions of Southeast Asia that helps to place the local variations in warfare in Southeast Asia examined in previous chapters into a larger geographical context that comparative military historians will find useful in making sense of the region.

The present volume provides a new overview of warfare in the region that has attempted to not succumb to the essentializing of the region through the examination of early modern warfare. Instead, it attempts to open the door for interrogating Southeast Asia’s martial past, freed from some of the Eurocentric constraints of earlier historiography, a little

Introduction

more widely while also reaffirming the diversity of the region. The emphasis on the differences within the region and between periods within local areas, we hope, will make the region more accessible to comparative work on warfare with other non-Western areas that will not remain fixated on the handful of tropes for which Southeast Asian warfare has been more commonly known in the historiography.

Warfare and Depopulation of the Trans-Mekong Basin and the Revival of Siam's Economy

Puangthong R. Pawakapan

Introduction

The exploitation rather than execution of prisoners of war is often presented as a typical characteristic of Southeast Asian warfare. Indeed, this practice could even be considered a corollary of the well-established idea that control of human resources rather than land was the most important element of traditional Southeast Asian statecraft. Depopulation could devastate a polity because people were needed for labour to generate revenues and to raise and mobilize armies. Without these armies, outlying centres could break away. In the case of Siam, which faced constant pressure from Burmese expansion, population maintenance was a perpetual concern. Continued sporadic warfare with Burma and the struggle among local rivals further exacerbated the problems. During King Taksin's 15-year reign (1767–1782), the Burmese attacked Siam's frontier towns nine times. The huge loss of population stemming from forced evacuation by the Burmese and deserters made it tremendously difficult to restore Siam's power. The Siamese had to secure people in order to offset the continuing demographic damage caused by the Burmese and others.

Siamese wars against neighbouring states along the Mekong River were always accompanied by the forced migrations of local people to resettle in the Siamese-controlled areas. Field reports sent to Bangkok on the situation of wars in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth

centuries were largely filled with the number of war captives being sent to resettle in Siam's controlled areas. Historians of Thailand agree that manpower control was the basic element in the formation of the traditional Siamese state and social organisation.¹ Manpower control was vital for the political and economic power of Siamese rulers, for it contributed to the state head taxes, labour for land cultivation and construction projects, and military forces. Therefore, the Siamese rulers continuously attempted to increase manpower by conquest, enticement and compulsion of their neighbours' inhabitants. Following wars with their neighbours, Siam always deported villagers from the defeated state to resettle in its domain. Despite this general agreement among scholars, most previous works stop short of claiming the economic significance of manpower mobilisation. It appears that only the contribution of the influx of Chinese labour for the Siamese economy has been fully appreciated.² Evacuees from the left bank of the Mekong River, Laotians and Khmers, have not received full attention.³ Although research has explored the significance of the left-bank migrants, they have mainly concentrated on certain aspects of the Siamese economy such as the collection of *suai* or head tax in the Northeast, and the origin of *muang* (towns) in the Northeast.⁴ They do not link the extensive evacuation of manpower in the neighbouring states with specific politico-economic requirements of Siam between the Thonburi (1767–1782) and early

1. Akin Rabhibhadhana, *The Organisation of Thai Society in the Early Bangkok Period, 1782–1873* (Ithaca, Cornell University, 1969); Nidhi Aeusrivongse, *Kan muang thai samai phrachao krung thonburi* [Thai Politics in the Reign of King Taksin] (Bangkok, Sinlapa watthanatham special issue, 1986): Chapters 1 & 3.
2. For example, although Englehart indicates that manpower was “the single most important indicator and constituent of power”, this primary commodity was not for economic ends but for political and religious ones. See Neil Englehart, *Culture and Power in Traditional Siamese Government* (Ithaca, Southeast Asia Program Publications, Cornell University, 2001): Chapter 2. The quotation is on p. 25.
3. There are only a handful of studies, such as Fernquist, “The Flight of Lao War Captives from Burma Back to Laos in 1596”.
4. See for example, Boonrod Kaewkanha, “Kan kep suai nai samai rattanakosin ton ton [Suai Collection during the Early Bangkok Period]” (MA thesis, Chulalongkorn University, 1974); Theerachai Boonmatham, “Kan kep suai nai huamuan lao fai tawan-ok [Suai Collection in the Eastern Lao Provinces during the Early Bangkok Period]”, *Warasan Thammasat*, 12, 4 (December 1983): 158–64; idem, *Prawattisat thongthin huamuang kalasin, pho.so.2336–2450* [Local History of Kalasin, A.D. 1793–1907] (MA thesis, Chulalongkorn University, 1981).

Bangkok (1782–1851) periods. Furthermore, none of them approaches the issue in terms of inter-state competition and economic perceptions of Siamese rulers towards the trans-Mekong region. The conflicts between Siam and its surrounding states that resulted in the appropriation of wealth into Siam have generally been explained as only being oriented towards political security rather than economic interests.

There is a remarkable work by Volker Grabowsky on the forced resettlements in the historical region of Lan Na, a present day Thailand's upper north, in the early nineteenth century. Chiang Mai led the depopulation campaigns with encouragement from its overlord in Bangkok. Grabowsky points out that the control of manpower was the crucial factor for establishing, consolidating and strengthening state political and economic power. Forced resettlement of the populace of the weaker states into the realm of the victors was the crucial part of the warfare. His work, however, focuses on the geographical and ethnic background of the war captives as the forced settlements significantly affected the ethnic composition and the regional distribution of the population in the upper Northern Thailand. While Grabowsky sees forced resettlement as a characteristic of warfare in the pre-colonial Southeast Asia,⁵ this chapter examines Siamese rulers' war campaigns against Laos and Cambodia in the early eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in the larger context of Siamese state building after the Burmese destruction of Ayudhya, the Siamese capital since 1350, in 1767. It discusses the links between warfare, manpower and the reconstruction of the post-Ayudhya Siam. Siamese rulers' relentless manoeuvres to acquire manpower to assist the economic and political recovery of the devastated kingdom led Siam into a series of warfare with its neighbours along the trans-Mekong Basin in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The effective mobilization of manpower in the trans-Mekong Basin enabled Siam to rebuild itself after the fall of Ayudhya and return to its former position as one of the most powerful states in the region in the early nineteenth century. This success must be attributed to Siam's successive warfare between the reigns of King Taksin (r. 1767–1782) of the Thonburi Dynasty and King Rama III (r. 1824–1851) of the Chakri Dynasty.

5. Volker Grabowsky, "Forced Resettlement Campaigns in Northern Thailand during the Early Bangkok Period", *Journal of the Siam Society* 87.1 & 2 (1999): 45–86.

The fall of Ayudhya had a devastating impact on Siamese society and on the country's politico-economic position. The central Chao Phraya Basin was largely deserted and its commercial and agricultural activities were severely disrupted. The country faced a serious famine that was further aggravated by droughts and floods. Indeed, the number of people who died of starvation in the first year of King Taksin's reign was probably higher than that of those who were killed in the war with Burma.⁶

Manpower was a key element not only of statecraft in general but also of Siam's recovery. It provided labour for the generation of revenue and for the mobilization of the army and the centre's consequent control over the outlying princes and nobles. Therefore, warfare and forced resettlement of people from the weaker states along the Mekong Basin were instrumental in Siam's reassertion of its politico-economic hegemony in the region. The weak states did not only lose their manpower, but were also subjugated under Siamese rulers. The forced evacuees provided both corvée labour for agricultural and military activities, and *suai*, head tax in kind or in money. *Suai* were comprised of valuable local and forest products, such as rhinoceros horn, ivory, gold, spices, etc. These products constituted a significant part of Siam's maritime trade in the early nineteenth century.⁷

It should be stressed that this process transcended the Mekong River. Before the advent of western concepts of bounded nation-states in Southeast Asia, the Mekong River was not perceived as a boundary to the power of Siamese rulers. Instead, Siam attempted to extend its influence into the Lao kingdoms and Cambodia, making the trans-Mekong region a major source of manpower for Siamese economic development. However, the presence of the Vietnamese created difficulties for the Thai consolidation of power over Cambodia and elsewhere as well as other parts of the Mekong region. As will be shown, the increasing ten-

6. "Chotmai het khong phuak bathluang farangset nai phaendin phrachao ekathat, khrang krung thonburi lae khrang krung rattanakosin ton ton" [Records of the French Missionaries during the Periods of King Ekathat, Thonburi, and the Early Bangkok], in *Prachum Phongsawadan Part 39* (Collected Chronicles) (Bangkok, Khurusapha, 1968): 193.

7. See more in Puangthong Rungwasdisab, "Siam and the Contest for Control of the Trans-Mekong Trading Networks from the Late Eighteenth to the Mid-Nineteenth Centuries", in Nola Cooke & Li Tana (eds), *Water Frontier: Commerce and the Chinese in the Lower Mekong Region, 1750–1880*, (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2004): 101–18.

sion with the courts of Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam finally led to more warfare and successive depopulation campaigns in the trans-Mekong Basin.

Labour Deficiency

To analyse the link between warfare, forced migrations and statecraft, it is important to first examine the complex division of manpower in the Siamese kingdom. There were two major categories of *phrai* (commoner): the *phrai luang* (able-bodied men belonging to a king) and the *phrai som* (able-bodied men belonging to the princes and nobles). However, the distinction between these two divisions outside the capital was unclear. Most of the *phrai luang* in the provinces were subject to tax payment in kind or in money and were thus referred to as *phrai kong muang* (able-bodied men of the *muang*) or *lek kong muang* (*Lek* was an interchangeable term for *phrai*). They were under the control of the *chaomuang*, a provincial governor. *Phrai luang* who were subject to tax were commonly referred to as *phrai suai* or *lek suai*. They were thus not subject to corvée labour. Some *phrai luang* were under the *Krom Na* (the Department of the Fields) and worked on the king's private fields. Others were called *lek dan* (border *lek*) and patrolled the border areas both along the kingdom and between *muang*. Some royal *phrai* were responsible for royal herds and captured elephants. Another royal *phrai* was *kha phra* (monk's servant) or *lek wat* (temple's *lek*) who were registered to temples and exempt from tax.⁸

Since *phrai som* were likely to face fewer burdens than the *phrai luang*, people preferred to become *phrai som* rather than *phrai luang*. They sometimes even bribed officials in order to be registered as *phrai som*. The princes and nobles increased their power and economic interests. This often resulted in intense factional disputes and wars, especially during times of succession. By contrast, it gravely affected the king's power.⁹

The fall of Ayudhya in 1767 resulted from the inability of the royal power in Ayudhya to mobilize troops from the princes and nobles in order to mount a defence against the Burmese incursions. The war with the Burmese further exacerbated problems of manpower through death,

8. Englehart, *Culture and Power in Traditional Siamese Government*, Appendix I.

9. Akin, *The Organisation of Thai Society*, 30–39, 56–59.

forced resettlement and flight. The Burmese army took away a substantial proportion of the population. Those who were not captured, were dispersed or fled to the jungle to hide, and a large number died of famine after the end of the war. The accounts of registration of *phrai* disappeared during the war. Meanwhile, those who were able to maintain effective control of people were the regional elites, namely the *chaomuang*. Some of these even tried to establish independent kingdoms and proclaimed themselves kings. Thus, when Siam's administration had not yet been re-established effectively, it was difficult for the government to secure cooperation from the regional elites in levying corvée labour and head tax for the government. The scarcity of manpower made the revival of agricultural activities, particularly in the central Chao Phraya Basin, more difficult. Throughout Taksin's reign, the country's capacity to produce rice was hardly able to meet domestic consumption, let alone revive the export trade in rice, which had existed during the Ayudhyan period. The lack of a substantial population not only obstructed the revival of economic life in the kingdom, but also weakened the power of the king vis-à-vis the princes and the nobles. It made Siam vulnerable to incursions from the neighbouring polity, as the seasonal Burmese attacks remained a threat to the country's security and demanded more labour for strengthening its defence.¹⁰

The Siamese rulers were well aware of the problems stemming from insufficient manpower. The first task of King Taksin after his accession was to subdue various political factions throughout the kingdom. Between the Thonburi and early Bangkok periods, the Siamese rulers tried consistently to increase the number of *phrai* and prevent their loss. Several measures were taken, such as sending out central officials to register able-bodied men in the remote areas by tattooing their bodies, granting tax exemptions on certain kinds of items such as market taxes, fishing taxes and land taxes, for the *phrai luang*. The period of corvée labour for the *phrai luang* was reduced from six months during the Ayudhyan period to four during the Thonburi period and to three months during the Second Reign or Rama II (r. 1809–1824) of the Bangkok period. A royal decree from 1783 indicates that any *phrai*

10. Nidhi Aeusrivongse, *Kan muang thai samai phrachao krung thonburi (Thai Politics of the Reign of King Taksin)* (Bangkok: Sinlapa Watthanatham, 1986): 5–23, 109–10, 150–61.

som who wished to institute a proceeding against his patron would be transferred to being *phrai luang*.¹¹ These were methods for luring more able-bodied men to submit to centralized authority because being *phrai luang* appeared to be harder than being *phrai som*. For example, sometimes the former had to travel to the capital to deliver their service to the court while the latter could do it within the vicinity of their hometown.

Siam's records show that forcibly resettling people from the defeated polities into Siam's domain was one of the most important tasks carried out by Siamese troops. After Taksin had defeated his political rivals in Phitsanulok and Nakhon Ratchasima, his army evacuated a large number of people from the two provinces to resettle in Thonburi.¹² The *Nong Chronicle* from Cambodia states that following Taksin's campaign in Cambodia in 1771–72, Cambodia lost 10,000 people, with a large number of them dying during the war.¹³ French missionary records also indicate that the Thonburi expedition against Vientiane and Champassak in 1778 carried back about 3,000 Laotians to resettle in the central Chao Phraya region.¹⁴

By the First Reign of the Chakri dynasty, when Siam's capital was moved from Thonburi to Bangkok, an effort to enforce manpower mobilisation remained a major task of the king. Rama I (r. 1782–1809) tried to encourage the locally based officials to carry out the *sak lek*, registration by tattooing able-bodied men. In 1783, one year after Rama I had ascended the throne, Siam despatched an order to various *chaomuang* to *sak lek* in their areas, for Bangkok needed to mobilize labour for the construction of the new capital.¹⁵

Following the invasions in Laos and Cambodia an effort was made to expand the administrative links with the local elites in these border areas. In 1783, about 10,000 Khmers and 5,000 Laotians were levied to dig a

11. Akin, *The Organisation of Thai Society*, 58.

12. "Chotmai het khong phuak bathluang farangset", 93–94.

13. "Nong Chronicle", in *Prachum Phongsawadan Part 1*, 143–44; See also "Chotmai het raiwan thap samai krung thonburi" [Records Concerning the Expeditions in the Thonburi Period] in *Prachum Phongsawadan Part 66*: 145.

14. "Chotmai het khong phuak bathluang farangset", in *Prachum Phongsawadan Part 39*, 149–50.

15. Prince Thiphakorawongse, *Phraratchaphongsawadan krung rattanakosin ratchakan thi nung* [The Dynastic Chronicle of the First Reign of the Chakri Dynasty], (Hereafter PKRR I) (Bangkok: Khurusapha, 1983): 44–45.

moat and build a city wall in Bangkok.¹⁶ In Cambodia, King Rama I of Siam ordered the Governor of Battambang and Siemreap *Ta-la-ha* Baen to mobilize troops for a variety of tasks such as assisting the Vietnamese Prince Nguyen Anh, who took refuge in the court of Rama I, to combat the Tayson rebellion.¹⁷

The reigns of Taksin and Rama I saw the creation of various *muang* in the Northeast and lower Laos such as Attapeu, Chiang Taeng, Chonlabot, Kalasin, Khonkaen, Saenpang, Phutthaisong, Sapad, Khukhan, Sisaket, Sangkha, Surin and Ubon.¹⁸ Generally speaking, it was the Siamese court's policy to encourage the local officials to create new *muang* by mobilising as many people as they could under their command, and then applying for royal validation. In doing so, the local officials were promoted to higher administrative titles and ranks. The more people they controlled, the more power and wealth they gained from their subjects. At the same time, the throne was able to augment its source of manpower.

It is worth noting that the trans-Mekong area, particularly the border region between Laos and Cambodia, was a traditional source of manpower for the surrounding states. During the Angkor Period (ninth to sixteenth centuries), the uplanders were captured to be sold as slaves in Cambodia.¹⁹ Local authority usually formed a troop and raided the area. They, then, put tattoos on the arms of the captives. These uplanders were locally known in Thai and Lao as “Kha” meaning slave, in Khmer “Phnong”, and in Vietnamese “Moi”, meaning savage. According to *Phongsawadan Huamuang Monthon Isan*, the creation of various *muang* in lower Laos – Champassak, Attapeu, Saenpang, Sithandon, Khong, Saravane and Chiang Taeng – depended largely upon the mobilisation of the Mon-Khmer-speaking uplanders. These uplanders became the source of power among the local elites in the Northeast in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. According to Amorawongwichit, the

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., 46, 108.

18. Amarawongwichit, “Phongsawadan huamuang monthon isan” [Chronicle of the Northeast], in *Prachum phongsawadan Part 4* (Bangkok, Khurusapha, 1963): 207–08, 212–13, 215, 217–18, 221–22.

19. Ian Mabbett, “Some Remarks on the Present State of Knowledge about Slavery in Angkor”, in Anthony Reid (ed.), *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia* (Queensland, University of Queensland Press, 1983): 44–54.

tradition of *ti kha*, raiding and capturing the “Kha” by Siamese officials, began around 1797, when there was a rebellion led by Chiang Kaew in Champassak. The *Yokrabat*, deputy governor of Khorat carried out Bangkok’s order to suppress the rebellion. After accomplishing this duty, the *Yokrabat*’s troops continued to raid and capture the uplanders in Champassak. Since then, when local officials in the Northeast wished to create a new *muang*, they raided and forcibly conscripted the uplanders from lower Laos.²⁰ Such practices went on until 1884 when the French threatened Siamese suzerainty in the east bank area, and subsequently compelled King Chulalongkorn to dispatch an order to the governors in the Northeast and in the Champassak territory prohibiting local officials from capturing the uplanders for sale or exchange.²¹ Nevertheless, the intrusion of the Siamese into these upland areas for the forced recruitment of local population began in the Second Reign. It caused tremendous trouble for the uplanders and resulted in a political crisis between Siam and its vassals that will be discussed below.

The Tattooing Raids

During the Second reign, problems of manpower were related to new economic challenges. At this time, western interests began challenging the royal trading monopoly system. The system was a major source of revenue not only for the Siamese monarchs, but also for the aristocrats, who largely participated in foreign trade and who also shared the benefits. The Siamese court experienced increasing difficulties with western merchants who demanded the liberalisation of trade. Eventually the internal administration was required to adapt in response to the western demands. In 1825, Rama III announced the abolition of the monopoly on various export articles and signed a commercial treaty with the British mission led by Henry Burney in 1826. The king then turned to an internal source of revenue, the tax farming system, which had been inherited from the Ayudhyan period. This involved a grant of royal permission to private individuals, usually Chinese, to collect taxes on certain products

20. Amarawongwichit, “Phongsawadan huamuang monthon isan,” 188–222. Also, see the testimony of one of Attapeu’s officials in 1886 in “Ruang muang nakhon champassak,” (Story of the Champassak Principality) in *Prachum Phongsawadan Part 70* (Bangkok, Khurusapha, 1969): 177–93.

21. “Ruang muang nakhon champassak,” in *Prachum Phongsawadan Part 70*, 189–90.

from people in a certain area during a specific period. In return, the king obtained a set amount of money offered by the prospective tax farmers. The system was applied more extensively during the Third Reign. An additional 38 items such as pepper, teak, coconut oil, sugar, tobacco, shrimp paste, iron pans and firewood were taxed.

The historians Lysa Hong and Nidhi Aeusrivongse agree that the successful shift to the tax farming system as the major source of state revenue was a result of the royal promotion of private commercial ventures to engage in foreign trade after the Thonburi period. In response to the increasing demand of the world market, the capacity of the country's production consequently expanded and thus could sustain the extensive use of the tax farming system by the state.²²

Despite the Siamese government's ability to adapt to changing circumstances, as demonstrated by its abandonment of the royal trading monopoly system, it is obvious that towards the end of the Second Reign the Siamese government confronted several difficulties which required it to seek another revenue resource. Even though the foreign trade of Siam with both China and western countries expanded during the Second Reign, the government suffered a crisis of revenue shortage as its expenditure was higher than its revenues. In some years, Rama II had to reduce by about half the amount of *biawat*, or grants for members of the royal family and the nobility, even substituting the *biawat* with products gained from the *suai* or head tax payment.²³ The Royal Treasury also experienced setbacks in the royal junk trade with China.²⁴ In some years, the price of export products for the Chinese market fluctuated, bringing a lower profit or disadvantaging Siamese junks.²⁵ Although this was not the case every year, the trade with China was still the most important for Siam. Therefore such instability coupled with

22. Hong Lysa, *Thailand in the Nineteenth Century: Evolution of the Economy and Society* (Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1984): 83–85; Nidhi Aeusrivongse, *Pakkai lae bairua* [The Sail and the Quill] (Bangkok: Sinlapa Wathanatham, 1984): 85–100.

23. Damrongrachanuphap, Prince, *Phraratchaphongsawadan rattanakosin ratchakan thi song* (Hereafter PKRR II) [The Dynastic Chronicle of the Second Reign of the Chakri Dynasty], 2 volumes (Bangkok: Khurusapha, 1961): 2.204–06.

24. Hong, *Thailand in the Nineteenth Century*: 45–47.

25. Sarasin Viraphol, *Tribute and Profit: Sino–Siamese Trade, 1652–1853* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1977): 225.

the revenue crisis of the government would have forced the king to seek another channel of revenue.

To cope with these difficulties, Siam required a higher concentration of resources to substitute for what it had lost by giving up the royal trading monopoly. The increasing volume of trade under pressure from the western nations forced the Siamese kings to make an effort to expand the volume of export articles, both forest products and staple crops. It was only possible to increase the production of exports because Siam had successfully expanded its population via its deliberate policy of forced resettlement. However, trade expansion also demanded effective control over the major trading networks in the region, to facilitate the flow of goods from distant areas to the capital and vice versa. The tax farming system can be seen as another effective means to facilitate the flow of local products to the political centre. It created economic links between Bangkok and the remote areas, through tax farmers setting up tax farms on certain items in a certain district and petitioning the king to allow them to be in charge of tax collection on the items. The tax farmers collected tax not only in currency but also in kind. They often had monopoly rights to purchase the items over which they held tax farms. Some tax farmers participated in local administration and held responsibility for conveying the *suai* payment and purchasing local products for the government.²⁶

The shortage of state revenue and western pressure on the royal trading monopoly therefore compelled Bangkok to improve its concentration of resources to substitute for what it had lost by giving up the royal monopoly system. Domestic production needed to be expanded in response to world market demand. To achieve such an aim, the country's labour system had to be improved and expanded. The increase of population in order to extend the production process was therefore imperative. Essentially, the *sak lek* was another means of controlling the regular flow of local products to the centre, since the tattooed conscripts became suppliers of *suai* for the centre. This reveals the attempt of the central power to extract benefit from individuals in distant regions with the cooperation of local officials. The more people they tattooed, the

26. Hong, *Thailand in the Nineteenth Century: Evolution of the Economy and Society*: 86–87, 91–93.

greater their control over the human resources involved in the network of product supply.

Manpower shortage remained a critical issue during the Second Reign. Though it was not an unusual feature of the traditional system, the 1810 royal decree of manpower registration shows that the court was unhappy with the disarray of information about manpower. The lists of *lek*, able-bodied men, were inaccurate. The number of *lek* had decreased due to various reasons: death, old age, disability, arbitrary changes to new platoons, and running away. Besides, some local officials tried to hide the actual number of *lek* under their command from Bangkok so that they could exploit the *lek* for their own benefit by not reporting those non-tattooed to Bangkok. According to the 1810 decree, the tattooing units first began their missions around the vicinity of Bangkok, and then continued to the distant regions where local officials were obliged to help and cooperate with the tattooing unit. Since palace-appointed officials accompanied the tattooing mission, it was difficult for local officials to keep the newly conscripted *lek* for their own use. Besides, the tattoo also identified the categories of *lek* or to where they belonged. The tattooing decree of 1810 was the first time that Bangkok had high-ranking officials from the capital lead the tattooing units into the countryside.²⁷ It suggests that forced conscription occurred in a more widespread manner than during the previous period.

Although Siam's conscription was not carried out in Cambodia, manpower and forced conscription were also points of antagonism between Bangkok and Oudong, the seventeenth to mid-nineteenth century capital of Cambodia. In 1810, Rama II ordered the Cambodian court to levy troops to help the Siamese campaign against the Burmese, but King Chan II (also Ang Chan II, r. 1792–1834) intentionally disregarded the request. The two Khmer *okya* or *oknha* "Lords" allied with the Siamese, *Chakroei* Baen and *Kalahom* Muang, arbitrarily raised the troops themselves without Chan's authorisation. Such non-compliance amounted to an act of rebellion against the royal power. As a result, Chan had Baen and Muang executed. Chan reported the matter to Bangkok with the excuse that the two *okya* intended to revolt against him.²⁸

27. Damrongrachanuphap, *PKRR II*: 43–46.

28. *Chotmai het ratchakan thi song cho.so.1173* [Records in the Second Reign, Lesser Era 1173 (AD 1811)] (Bangkok, Published on the occasion of the 203rd birthday

Chan's refusal to comply with Bangkok's demand was understandable, since none of the rulers wanted to lose their manpower. Bangkok's requirement directly decreased the number of guards and revenue suppliers available for the Cambodian government. The lack of manpower was a key factor that hindered the Cambodian monarch from strengthening his power over local and external rivals.

The weaker state thus looked for outside assistance from another powerful neighbour. Thereafter the rise of Vietnamese power in the east, especially after the Nguyen dynasty finally defeated the three-decade-long Tayson rebellion in 1802, offered the chance for Chan to decline such compulsory demands of Bangkok. In 1812, due to the conflict between Chan and his half-brothers, he moved from Oudong to reside in Phnom Penh, which the Vietnamese warships could approach more easily than Oudong. Oudong, on the other hand, was accessible to the Siamese army stationed in Battambang. The Vietnamese strengthened the city of Phnom Penh by building a citadel and storehouses.²⁹ They began to intrude into and monopolise Cambodian affairs. After Chan died in 1835, Queen Mei (r. 1835–40) and her younger sisters were under full custody in South Vietnam. By the reign of Emperor Minh Mang of Vietnam (r. 1819–41), Cambodia was divided into more than 30 Sino–Vietnamese prefectures and districts, abolishing the provinces. Cambodian officials were given Sino–Vietnamese titles and grades. The Vietnamese controlled important administrative decisions such as personnel postings, salaries, military affairs, and the control of rice surpluses. A Vietnamese taxation system was introduced. Minh Mang's polity also sought to Vietnamize the practices of the people, patterns of measurement, mobilisation, and food supplies for military reasons.³⁰

The execution of Baen and Muang clearly demonstrated Chan's disdain for the Siamese monarch. According to tradition, the vassal ruler was not allowed to execute high-ranking officials himself, but had to send them to Bangkok for trial.³¹ From the point of view of Bangkok,

of Rama II, 1971): 54–56.

29. *Chotmaihet ratchakan thi song cho.so.* 1173, 132–37.

30. Woodside, *Vietnam and the Chinese Model*: 234–61; David Chandler, *A History of Cambodia*, Second edition (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1993): 123–32; idem., *Cambodia Before the French: Politics of the Tributary Kingdom* (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Michigan, 1973): Chapter 3.

31. Chandler, *Cambodia Before the French*: 88.

however, the suzerain held the right to levy labour from his vassals. People living on the vassal's lands were perceived as his own subjects, *kha khopkhanthasima*. In other words, Bangkok considered Laos and Cambodia to be legitimate sources of labour for the Siamese kingdom. Such a perception was explicitly expressed in Bangkok's dispatches to the army chiefs while performing their mission in the Phuan state:

The Vietnamese have dominated and appropriated Cambodia and Laos from Bangkok, since Bangkok was involved in a protracted war with the Burmese. Since the Vientiane revolt, many Lao families in the east bank fled to hide in those town (in the Phuan state). So, the king (Rama III) wanted the army to attack and return the land and people to be subjects of Bangkok as they used to be.³²

The depopulation campaign was an alternative means to claim Bangkok's right over the vassal's resources. The refusal to comply with Bangkok would lead to harsh measures as was the case in Cambodia between 1833 and 1847, as will be discussed below.

While Bangkok was unable to exploit the manpower of Cambodia as long as Chan was on the throne and the Vietnamese influence remained there, Bangkok moved to advance and intensify its control over the border region in the Northeast and Laos. The forced conscription was undertaken extensively and caused local people tremendous troubles with the result that they turned against Siamese authority.³³ The *Phongsawadan Huamuang Monthon Isan* (Chronicle of the Northeast) indicates that at the time of the revolt the conscription team led by the governor of Khorat was carrying out labour conscription in Khong in Champassak territory, and sent the news of the revolt to Bangkok.³⁴ The *Phun Wiang* [The History of Vientiane] relates the conscription as a reason behind the revolt.³⁵

32. "Chotmaihei kieokap khmen lae yuan nai ratchakan thi sam" [Records Concerning Cambodia and Vietnam During the Third Reign], in *Prachum Phongsawadan Part* 67, 41: 257, 266, 269.

33. Mayoury and Pheuiphanh Ngaosyvathn, *Paths to Conflagration: Fifty Years of Diplomacy and Warfare in Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam, 1778–1828* (Ithaca, Southeast Asia Program Cornell University, 1998): 47–49.

34. Amarawongwichit, "Phongsawadan huamuang monthon isan": 229.

35. Thawat Punnothok, *Phun wiang: kansuksa prawattisat lae watthanatham isan* [History of Vientiane: A Study of History and Literature of the Northeast Siam] (Bangkok, Thai Khadi Studies Institute, 1983): 80–83.

The *Phun Wiang* points out that the harsh measures carried out by Siamese officials caused chaos among the local people. Those who disobeyed the authorities were executed, and many ran away to hide in the jungle. The conscription units even captured travelling merchants.³⁶ This fed a millenarian-tinged rebellion led by the monk Chao Sa, who promised to end the suffering of the people and bring them prosperity. When the news of his reputed magical power began to circulate, people fled to join him. They formed a kind of army to fight the conscription units. After Chao Sa had successfully gathered a force of about 8,000 people, they marched to attack the city of Champassak, which was rapidly defeated, because its ruler, Chao Manoi, soon abandoned the city and fled to Ubon without attempting to fight. When Bangkok received the news, Siamese troops from Ubon and Khorat immediately mobilised and recaptured the city. The monk Chao Sa was finally captured by the Vientiane forces led by Chao Anu and his son Chao Yo, and was executed in Bangkok. Chao Manoi was also sent to Bangkok, where he later died.³⁷

By the Third Reign, the mobilisation of manpower in the Northeast and Laos was well underway. One year after Rama III's succession, the court issued the royal conscription decree of 1825.³⁸ Bangkok failed to learn the lesson that extensive conscription had resulted in local uprising like that of the Chao Sa revolt, and again used force on the people of the trans-Mekong region. According to *Phun Wiang*, the governor of Khorat volunteered to carry out conscription in the Northeast and the left bank.³⁹ Again, *Phongsawadan Huamuang Monthon Isan* refers to the appearance of Siamese conscription units conducting their duties in the Northeast at the time of the revolt, and the killing of conscription officials at Suwannaphum by Champassak's troops.⁴⁰ In the first stage, the conscription took place in the Khorat Plateau. Local people there

36. Prateep Chumphol, *Phun wiang* [A History of Vientiane] (Bangkok, Samnakphim Adit, 1982): 75–81.

37. Damrongrachnuphap, *PKRR II*: 2.65.

38. Thai National Library (hereafter NL), *CMH. R.III C.S.1187/7*, in *Chotmaihet ratchakan thi sam* [Records of the Third Reign] (Bangkok: Government of Thailand, 1987): 2.38–40.

39. Prateep, *Phun wiang*: 97–98.

40. Amarawongwichit, "Phongsawadan huamuang monthon isan", 232; Also, Thiphakorawongse, *PKRR III*: 1.44.

were in distress, and fled across the Mekong River to seek refuge in Vientiane's territory. The conscription efforts subsequently proceeded into Champassak territory.

The widespread conscription across the Mekong River provoked dissatisfaction from Chao Anu as well as from Chao Yo who was now the ruler of Champassak principality. In conjunction with the rumours of conflict between the Bangkok court and the British who had sent a naval force against the former, Anu and Yo seized the chance to fight against the conscription team in 1827. The troops of Vientiane and Champassak raided unopposed as far as Saraburi with the main objective of bringing the Lao people back to the left bank.⁴¹

The revolt infuriated Rama III, who had previously favoured and supported Anu and Yo. When the news reached Bangkok, Rama III immediately dispatched troops to crush the revolt. Finally in early 1828, Anu was captured and ruthlessly executed in Bangkok, while Yo safely escaped to Vietnam. The Siamese army led by Phraya Ratchasuphawadi, and later by Chao Phraya Bodindecha, finally raided and burnt down Vientiane. Its villagers were forcibly evacuated and resettled in Siam.

The Siamese ruthlessness towards Vientiane reveals the extent of the anxiety that the revolt caused the Siamese, based on their politico-economic security in the trans-Mekong Basin. The Vientiane and Champassak principalities, which were supposed to be Siam's bases, unexpectedly turned against it and sought protection from its rival. This was the first time since the establishment of Siamese control that a neighbour had invaded the Khorat Plateau. It indeed shocked the Siamese when Chao Anu's army launched an attack en route to Khorat and Saraburi so close to the heartland of the kingdom. Together with the decline of Siamese influence in Cambodia since the Second Reign, the revolt exposed the fact that now the long eastern frontier of Siam was in real danger. The expansion of Vietnamese power and the antagonistic relationship with both Laos and Cambodia deprived the Siamese of access to the sources of labour and products along the trans-Mekong Basin. Consequently, Bangkok urgently manoeuvred to assert firm control on the right bank by creating new administrative centres. Chiang Khan was established to govern the area from the south of Luang Phrabang nearly to Vientiane. Nongkhai was to look after the long but sparsely populated

41. Thawat, *Phun wiang*: 78.

stretch of the Mekong until Nakhon Phanom. The area farther down-river was under the governments of Mukdahan and Khemmarat.⁴²

Although the Siamese had successfully put down the Chao Anu revolt in early 1828, a series of depopulation campaigns along the left bank continued until the 1840s with the purpose of removing as many people as possible to resettle in the area under effective Siamese control on the right bank.⁴³ The successive mass exoduses during this period contributed to the creation of 40 new provinces in Northeast Siam. The annual *suai* payment, the head tax in kind or in money,⁴⁴ to Bangkok from the Northeast and east-bank Lao towns, which became more systematically and regularly paid after 1830, was indeed the consequence of the warfare and mass depopulation of the left bank people into the Siamese domain since the Vientiane war. The large scale of the forced resettlement campaigns enabled Siam to populate the kingdom, deserted by the Burmese war, but also provided Siam with economic resources.⁴⁵

Depopulation Campaigns in Cambodia

In Cambodia, the 14-year war between Siam and Vietnam began in 1833, when the news of the Le Van Khoi revolt in southern Vietnam against Minh Mang reached Bangkok. A series of Siamese expeditions and depopulation campaigns in Cambodia was launched. The areas under strong Vietnamese influence, the east bank and the coastal areas, especially Phnom Penh, Hatien and Sombok, were the major targets of the Siamese military incursions. Full-scale deportation of the local population and Vietnamese soldiers in Cambodia also took place in

42. For discussion on the Siamese depopulation campaigns in Laos, see Kennon Breazeale & Sanit Smuckarn, *A Culture in Search of Survival: The Phuan of Thailand and Laos* (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, Monograph Series 31, 1988): Chapter 3.

43. Ibid.

44. For extensive studies of the *suai* system, see Boonrod, "Kan Kep Suai Nai Samai Rattanakosin Ton Ton": Chapters 3 and 4; Theerachai, "Kan Kep Suai Nai Huamuan Lao Fai Tawan-ok" [*Suai* Collection in the Eastern Lao Provinces During the Early Bangkok Period]: 158–64; Junko Koizumi, "The Commutation of *Suai* from Northeast Siam in the Middle of the Nineteenth Century", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 23.2 (September 1992): 278–81.

45. For further information, see, Puangthong "Siam and the Contest for Control of the Trans-Mekong Trading Networks from the Late Eighteenth to the Mid-Nineteenth Centuries": 101–18.

these areas.⁴⁶ The Siamese documents are filled with descriptions of famine, burning down villages and Vietnamese camps, deserted villages, people's flight into the jungle and numbers of war captives. The extent of the enmity against the dissident King Chan and the Vietnamese is explicitly expressed in Rama III's remark to Chao Phraya Bodin:

You are to figure out a means of returning Cambodia to Bangkok as it used to be. If this is not possible, you should turn Cambodia into forest, only the land, the mountains, the rivers, and the canals are to be left. You are to carry off Khmer families to be resettled in Thai territory, do not leave any behind. It would be good to treat Cambodia as we did Vientiane.⁴⁷

Another letter from the Siamese court to Chao Phraya Bodin states: "If Chao Phraya Bodindecha has an idea what should be done, let him do it with success. Do not fail. You must try to bring more people for resettlement in the kingdom to serve as our manpower."⁴⁸ A full-scale deportation was carried on throughout the 14-year war.

In contrast to the Siamese depopulation policy, Vietnam encouraged its people to reside and trade in Cambodia. However, there were attempts by the Vietnamese to bring back Siam's war captives and resettle them in Phnom Penh, by then a prosperous trading city in Cambodia. Therefore, there was a series of forced evacuations by the Siamese and counter evacuation by the Vietnamese.⁴⁹

The deportees referred to in Siamese documents included Chinese, Chinese Khmer, Vietnamese and Chinese Vietnamese. Evidence indicates that the evacuees were placed in either the agricultural base

46. For accounts showing depopulation and devastation in Cambodia, TNL, CMH. R.III C.S.1197/3; CMH. R.III C.S.1204/1/cho/9; CMH. R.III C.S.1204/1/cho/12; CMH. R.III C.S.1204/1/cho/17; K. S. L. Kulap, *Annam sayamyuth waduai kansongkhram rawang thai lao khmen lae yuan* [Annam-Siam War: War Between the Thai, the Laotian, the Khmer, and the Vietnamese], 2 vols. (Bangkok, Phrae Phitthaya, 1971): 611-13, 618, 658, 857-58, 967, 990-91; *Chotmai het ruang thap yuan khang ratchakan thi sam* [Records Concerning Expeditions Against Vietnam During the Third Reign], (Bangkok, Cremation volume for General Phraya Singhaseni, 1933): 7-28, 34; "Chotmai het kieokap khmen lae yuan", in *Prachum Phongsawadan Part 67 Volume 42*: 36, 42-43, 56.

47. Kulap, *Annam sayamyuth waduai kansongkhram rawang thai lao khmen lae yuan*: 2.788.

48. *Ibid.*, 244; also 257, 260, 268.

49. *Chotmai het ruang thap yuan khang ratchakan thi sam*, 21, 26, 34.

area of the central Chao Phraya Basin or the forest product base in the Khorat Plateau. Some of the Khmer manpower was put in the *suai* units in Chachoengsao. The deportation of Khmers allowed the creation of another four *suai* units in Chachoengsao in 1847. All the *lek suai* under the *suai* units of Phra Kamphut Phakdi, Khun Rucha Decho, Khun Thepphromma, and Phra Wichit Songkhram were Khmer.⁵⁰

Concerning those forced migrants who participated in the production process of staple crops, the Siamese authorities often placed them in Nakhon Chaisi, Chachoengsao and Ratchaburi. Since the early nineteenth century, these areas had served as the major sugar growing regions of Siam,⁵¹ an industry that became increasingly important to Siamese foreign trade during the Second Reign. By the Third Reign, sugar was Siam's highest value export item. Owing to the low price and relatively good quality of its sugar, Siam attracted a large number of western vessels to buy sugar at Bangkok's port.⁵² It is estimated that in 1821 Siam produced approximately 60,000 *piculs* (3,600,000 kilograms) of sugar and 110,000 *piculs* (6,600,000 kilograms) in 1844.⁵³ The biggest markets for Siam's sugar were China and Singapore respectively.

50. Constance M. Wilson, "The Nai Köng in Thai Administration, 1824–68", in Constance M. Wilson, Chrystal Stillings Smith, & George Vinal Smith (eds), *Royalty and Commoners: Essays in Thai Administrative, Economic, and Social History* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1980): 52–53.

51. For example, see TNL, CMH. R.III C.S.1207/276; *Chotmai het ratchakarn thi sam*, 5.59–78, 92–96; Prince Thiphakorawongse, *Ruamruang kieokap yuan lae khmen nai samai rattanakosin (ratchakarn thi nung tung si)* [Collected Royal Chronicles Concerning Vietnam and Cambodia between the First and the Fourth Reigns] (Bangkok, Cremation volume for Khosit Wetchachiwa, 1964): 139; Kulap, *Annam sayamyuth waduai kansongkhram rawang thai lao khmen lae yuan*, 614, 662–63, 869, 928; "Chotmai het kieokap khmen lae yuan nai ratchakarn thi sam", [Records Concerning Cambodia and Vietnam During the Third Reign], *Prachum Phongsawadan Part 67 Volume 41*, (Bangkok, Khurusapha, 1969): 283; *Prachum Phongsawadan Part 67 Volume 42*, 1, 5, 7, 9–10, 69–70, 121–23; TNL, CMH. R.III C.S.1197/3.

52. Adisorn Muakphimai, "Krom tha kap rabop setthakit thai: wikhro khongsang lae kan plianplaeng tangtae samai thonburi thung kantham sonthi sanya bowring pho. so. 2310–2398" [Department of Port Authority and the Thai Economy: Analysis of the Structure and Changes between the Thonburi Period and the Establishment of the Bowring Treaty, AD 1767–1855] (MA thesis, Thammasat University, 1988): 132–34.

53. *Ibid.*, 132. One *picul* is equivalent to 60 kilograms.

Previous studies have emphasised only the role of the Chinese labourers in the notable expansion of Siam's sugar industry.⁵⁴ Chinese labour was indeed significant. The Chinese migrants had first initiated the manufacture of sugar from sugar cane in Siam in the early 1810s, and the influx of Chinese labour during the late eighteenth century stimulated the growth sugar industry in Siam. But Chinese labour alone was not enough to fulfil the needs of this rapidly growing industry. In some years, the amount of produced sugar cane was not sufficient to supply the sugar factories and this led to a conflict among the factory owners attempting to secure the sugar cane supply. It is likely that the Chinese tended to be involved in the sugar processing industry, while the forced migrants served in the cultivation. It is evident that in 1847, in Nakhon Chaisi alone, about 2,302 *rai* (920.8 acres) of sugar plantation belonged to the Chinese, while about 7,322 *rai* (2,928.8 acres) belonged to the Siamese.⁵⁵ The need for labour supply in expanding agricultural production was reflected in the reduction of the period of annual corvée to three months in the Second Reign. It was essential to allow a more flexible movement of labour to make it available for the production process.⁵⁶ Thus, the forced migration was crucial to the further expansion of Siam's agricultural production. A dispatch from Chao Phraya Chakri to the governor of Nakhon Chaisi demonstrates the court's concern over effective labour management in sugar production: "[The governor of Nakhon Chaisi] should properly and effectively organise the Chinese, Laotian and Khmer people to grow more sugar cane than ever before."⁵⁷

Interestingly, a study of the history of *Krom Tha* (Department of Port Authority) by Adisorn reveals that Siamese nobles during the Third Reign were heavily involved in the sugar industry. Rama III owned two sugar factories in Nakhon Chaisi and one factory in Chachoengsao. Krom mun Surintharak, a royal family member in charge of the *Krom Tha*, co-invested with Chao Phraya Phra Khlang (Dit), minister of Treasury and acting *Kalahom* (Defence), and his brother, Chao Phraya

54. Sarasin, *Tribute and Profit: Sino-Siamese Trade, 1652-1853*: 214; Nidhi, *Pakkai lae bairua*, 112-15.

55. Adisorn, "Krom tha kap rabop setthakit thai": 282-83. Approximately, 2.5 *rai* are equivalent to 1 acre.

56. Hong, *Thailand in the Nineteenth Century*: 55.

57. TNL, CMH. R.III C.S.1205/20.

Sriphiphat (That), the *Changwang* (supervisor) of *Krom Tha*. Dit and That owned the biggest sugar factory in Siam during the Third and Fourth Reigns. Other high-ranking officials of *Krom Tha* who invested in sugar factories were Phraya Chodoc Ratchasetthi, the minister of *Krom Tha*, who had one factory in Samutsakon, and Phraya Sombatwanit and Phraya Ratchamontri who each owned one factory in Nakhon Chaisi.⁵⁸

As a matter of fact, the southern and eastern coasts of Siam were under the control of Chao Phraya Phra Khlang (Dit) and Chao Phraya Sriphiphat (That). These nobles also appear to have exerted influence over the affairs of Nakhon Chaisi and Chachoengsao, both of which were under the administrative power of the *Samuhanayok*, minister of *Krom Mahatthai* (the Interior). This is shown in a dispatch of the *Krom Tha* advising the governor of Chachoengsao to take care of and assist the Chinese who wished to establish a sugar factory there. Furthermore, when there were revolts led by the Chinese in Nakhon Chaisi in 1847, and in Chachoengsao in 1848, Dit led an army to suppress the revolts.⁵⁹ In fact, Dit and That were the most influential nobles in the court of Rama III, having formed an alliance to support Rama III's succession. The accounts of Luang Udomsombat demonstrate that they retained a very good friendship with the king. Dit had been a business partner of Rama III in the junk trade with China when Rama III was still Prince Chetsadabodin. These two brothers played essential roles in the court's administrative decision-making and responsibilities; for they were the most favoured nobles with whom Rama III liked to discuss the kingdom's affairs. They seem to have influenced the court's policy on all important issues.⁶⁰

The background of Dit and That therefore gives a clearer picture of the relationship between the economic interests of the Siamese ruling class and warfare. The pattern of forced resettlement was designed to meet the growing needs of agricultural production under the control of the nobles in collaboration with the crown. The right to control and exploit the able-bodied men allowed the Siamese nobles the best position to profit from the new export-oriented agricultural business opportunity,

58. Adisorn, "Krom tha kap rabop setthakit thai": 291, 293.

59. Thiphakorawongse, *PKRR III*, 2.123–30.

60. Luang Udomsombat, *Chotmai luang udomsombat* [Letters of Luang Udomsombat] (Bangkok: Krom Sinlapakorn, 1987).

which was labour and capitalist-intensive in nature. Besides, the Siamese nobles' active involvement in the country's foreign trade provided them with information on world market demand. So they were able to decide effectively where the best places to resettle the new manpower were in response to foreign trading prospects.

The forced migrants who resettled in Bangkok, Nonthaburi, Angthong, Suphanburi, Ayudhya, Lopburi, and Saraburi, tended to participate in rice cultivation. Since the Second Reign, there had been a large number of Lao, Khmer, Burmese and Mon migrants placed in those areas.⁶¹ Rice was very essential for both domestic consumption, including the army, and export. By 1850, the value of rice exports was ranked fifth in value among Siam's export items.⁶²

With respect to Laos and Cambodia, it is possible to assert that the resettlement campaigns had an enormous impact on these two smaller states' populations. Comparing the demography of Phnom Penh to that of Battambang, which was under Siamese control and therefore exempt from resettlement campaign, is useful for examining the effect of the depopulation and devastation of Phnom Penh. In 1862, a French official estimated that while Battambang had population of around 15,000 to 18,000 people, Phnom Penh had only 5,000 inhabitants.⁶³ In 1886, the total of population of Cambodia was just 678,200 (excluding Battambang and Siemreap that were still under the Siamese rule), while Vietnam had 10,028,498 inhabitants.⁶⁴

In addition, Siam's depopulation campaigns in Cambodia during the 1830s and 1840s appear to have had a lasting impact on the demography of Phnom Penh. As the most vibrant trading city of Cambodia,

61. For example, see Thiphakorawongse, *Ruamruang kieokap yuan lae khmen nai samai rattanakosin* (*ratchakarn thi nung tung si*, 137; Kulap, *Annam sayamyuth waduai kansongkhram rawang thai lao khmen lae yuan*: 614; *Prachum Phongswadan Part 67 Volume 41*: 283; *Prachum Phongswadan Part 67 Volume 42*: 121–23; Chotmaiher *ruang thap yuan krang ratchakan thi sam*: 28; TNL, CMH. R.III C.S.1202/83: 28; Chotmaiher *ratchakan thi song cho.so.* 1173, 41.

62. D. E. Malloch, *Siam: Some General Remarks on Its Production* (Calcutta, Baptist Mission Press, 1852): 52.

63. Archives Nationale Depot d'Outremer, Aix-en-Provence (hereafter AOM), *Amiraux* 12705, "Rapport sur le Cambodge, Voyage de Sai-gon à Battambang par Spooner, 30 decembre 1862."

64. AOM, (Indochine) A. F. Carton 111 dossier G 01(2), "Population de l'Indochine de 1886."

one would expect it to be well populated. But in 1907, Phnom Penh was ranked only twelfth among Cambodian towns (excluding Battambang and Siemreap). About half of its population was Chinese and Vietnamese (see Table 1.1). In fact, a large number of Chinese and Vietnamese migrated to Cambodia after the country had become a French Protectorate in 1867 and they preferred to resettle in the commercial cities like Phnom Penh.⁶⁵ But after years of migration of the Chinese and Vietnamese into Cambodia, the population of Phnom Penh was still lower than that of other Cambodian towns. This implies that Phnom Penh in the first half of the nineteenth century must have been much smaller than in 1907. It lost a sizable number of people to Siam's forced evacuations.⁶⁶ In contrast to Phnom Penh, the Siamese wanted to maintain the Battambang region for their political and economic base. Battambang did not suffer the destructive experiences of Phnom Penh. The denser population of Battambang was a result of the Siamese manoeuvres to develop and strengthen it.⁶⁷ The nineteenth-century Western explorers in Cambodia never failed to mention the prosperity and active commerce of Battambang.⁶⁸

Conclusion

The Siamese depopulation campaigns in the early nineteenth century had remarkably diminished the size of Cambodia's population. The loss of the enormous manpower reserves of the Cambodian and Laotian kingdoms consequently weakened the power of these two lesser states in all respects, for the basis to form an effective means to build economic and military viability was destroyed. It automatically deteriorated state

65. Only Kampot had a higher number of Chinese than Phnom Penh. There were 15,058. But the number of Vietnamese in Kampot was much smaller, only 2,173. AOM, (Indochine), *A.F. Carton 111 dossier G 01 (6)*. "Statistique population du Cambodge année 1907."

66. The year 1907 saw the retrocession of Battambang and Siemreap provinces to Cambodia and the signing of a border treaty between Siam and French Indochina.

67. Puangthong, "Siam and the Contest for Control of the Trans-Mekong Trading Networks from the Late Eighteenth to the Mid-Nineteenth Centuries", 101–18.

68. For example, Henri Mouhot, *Travels in the Central Parts of Indochina (Siam), Cambodia, and Laos*, (1864): 272–75; AOM, (Indochine) *Amiraux 12705*, "Rapport sur le Cambodge, Voyage du Saigon à Battambang par Spooner, 30 decembre 1862"; *Gouvernement Général 26143*, "Rapport du Lieutenant Maitret sur sa mise à Battambang, 1897."

Table 1.1: Classification of population of the provinces of Phnom Penh and Battambang in 1907

Ethnicities	Phnom Penh	Battambang
Khmer	21,903	154,000
Vietnamese	9,489	6,000
Chinese	12,533	30,000
Half caste (<i>métis</i>)	320	–
Indian	419	–
Cham–Malay	–	2,000
Laotian	128	3,000
Siamese	–	1,000
“Uplanders”	–	–
Japanese	27	3
<i>Total</i>	44,819	200,000

Sources: AOM, (Indochine) A. F. Carton 111 dossier G 01(6), “Statistique population du Cambodge année 1907”; AOM, (Indochine) *Résidences Supérieures du Cambodge* 254, “Rapport de Monsieur Breucq, sur Battambang, 15 février 1907.” Note that the number of Chinese for Battambang presented in this table also includes those referred to as “half-caste”.

revenue, since the number of taxpayers decreased, local trade was disrupted, and the deserted area was not attractive to traders. The capacity to build up military power for defending the country against the invasions of the more powerful neighbours was diminished. In the nineteenth century, Cambodian kings were unable to withstand interventions and invasions by their powerful neighbours.

For Siam, the large scale of the forced resettlement campaigns along the trans-Mekong basin did not only enable the Siamese to populate their kingdom, deserted by the Burmese War; they also provided Siam with a basis for building up its economy that had been devastated since 1767. The massive influx of labour enabled the Siamese elite to develop its production in response to the changing global demand and to create a level of prosperity. The resettlements were carried out in the economically well-planned manner, which in turn enabled the consolidation of state power over a widening territory in mainland Southeast Asia. Therefore, the continuous and massive scale of forced resettlement

campaigns were an important part of the mission to build up a new and strong kingdom in the Chao Phraya Basin in the post-Ayudhyan period. Forced resettlement was the major objective and integral part of Siamese warfare against its neighbours along the Mekong River Basin. The campaigns were accompanied by mobilized armed forces, whose duties were to administer the relocation of population and to subdue those who escaped or resisted the relocation. People were uprooted from their homeland and/or families and became war slaves in their new homes. In other words, it could be said that forced resettlement was a kind of warfare.

Moreover, the eastward expansion did not only facilitate a concentration of economic and military resources for rebuilding Siamese state power after 1767; the depopulation campaigns often involved territorial consolidation of peripheral regions and distant principalities across the Mekong River. According to Keyes, the Siamese administration in the seventeenth century could only vaguely incorporate the region as far as Khorat (Nakhon Ratchasima).⁶⁹ The Cambodian and Laotian kingdoms sent tribute to the Ayudhyan court on an irregular basis. But from the Thonburi period and particularly by the reign of Rama III of the Chakri Dynasty, Siamese hegemony was more firmly established as far as the east bank of the Mekong River. After the Chao Anu revolt in 1827–28, the Lao kingdoms of Vientiane and Champassak were placed under direct Siamese administration. Battambang and Siemreap became part of the Siamese administrative system. Tribute and local tax collection were conveyed to Bangkok annually; censuses were taken more regularly.⁷⁰ Such dramatic development indicates a process of political and economic centralization in mainland Southeast Asia. Only when the new idea of a modern nation-state with strictly demarcated boundaries and contiguous sovereignty arrived in the mid-nineteenth century, was Siam pressured to give up her sovereignty over people and resources on the other side of the Mekong River.⁷¹ In other words, before the arrival

69. Charles Keyes, *Isan: Regionalism in Northeast Thailand* (Ithaca, Southeast Asia Program Cornell University, 1967): 7–9.

70. For details of the relations of war, trade and tax collection, see Puangthong, “Siam and the Contest for Control of the Trans-Mekong Trading Networks from the Late Eighteenth to the Mid-Nineteenth Centuries.”

71. Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geobody of Siam* (Honolulu, The University of Hawai'i Press, 1994).

of the new geography, Siamese rulers did not perceive the Mekong River as a boundary to their claims over people and resources across the River. The survival and prosperity of the Chao Phraya River-based kingdom thus relied extensively on the livelihood of those along the Mekong Basin.

Records on warfare in Southeast Asia are often full of details of devastation, troop mobilization, depopulation and forced resettlements but rarely state the objective of the rulers. While royal chronicles often portray the rulers' major ambitions of achieving a status of the king of kings, or a universal monarch, an ideal position of the Buddhist monarch. This chapter, however, has shown that warfare was not simply a matter of power exercise by rulers in Southeast Asia. Warfare is part and parcel of state building in economic, political and military aspects.

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La Maddukelleng and Civil War in South Sulawesi

Kathryn Wellen

Introduction

Understanding local or village warfare in Southeast Asia requires the examination of numerous case studies, the more detailed the better. A drawn-out conflict fought in the Bugis land of Wajoq in South Sulawesi, Indonesia (see Figure 2.1) and culminating in the so-called Pénéki War of 1762 provides an exceptionally rich and well-documented case study. Through it, we can begin to discern not only what warfare was like on the ground for the participants but also its use and usefulness as a political tool. The conflict also provides insights into the nature of Bugis statecraft.

The Bugis are the largest ethnic group in the province of South Sulawesi, located on the southwestern peninsula of the spider-shaped island between Borneo and the Moluccas. Bugis society is divided into a plethora of small communities. Extremely hierarchical, these communities are formed on the basis chains of loyalty between individuals. Bugis communities have coalesced into numerous polities, the largest of which include Luwuq, Boné, Wajoq, Soppéng, Ajjatapparang, and Sidénréng. Each of these have their own customs and legal systems but the societies are closely related and have often cooperated for political and military aims. Traditionally, the majority of the Bugis population has been rice agriculturalists but highly-visible minorities have worked as mercenaries and traders. The people of Wajoq in particular are known for their overseas commerce which was facilitated not only by the navigability of the Cenrana River to the south of Wajoq but also by Wajorese legal and

social systems.¹ Indeed, Wajorese commerce was so outstanding that one nineteenth century observer commented: “Distant enterprise is almost confined to the people of Wajo, and they have a saying amongst them, that a Boni or Sopping trader must have Wajo blood in his veins.”²

Traditional Bugis statecraft was characterized by a complex system of loyalties. This system permitted smaller communities to change their allegiance from one overlord to another according to where they perceived their best interests to lie. This flexibility, in turn, permitted intricate, personality-based conflicts. These conflicts are exemplified by the manner in which the conduct of a father and son, as described in both Bugis and Dutch sources, resulted in nearly three decades of civil strife in Wajoq, a Bugis polity in South Sulawesi. The story of the father, La Maddukelleng, is well known in Indonesia and beyond. His colorful career has been the subject of academic works by Zainal Abidin and J. Noorduyn and he was made a national hero in Indonesia in 1998.³ The fact that he was expelled by Wajoq, the very land he ostensibly sought to liberate, is conveniently overlooked; as is the fact that his son was a horse thief and the source of more political strife. La Maddukelleng’s conduct and that of his son La Pakka does not matter as much for national hero status as the facts that he represents an underrepresented area of Indonesia and that he fought against the Dutch. This historiography aside, their stories shed light on the nature of warfare among the Bugis, the influence of politics on warfare, and the efficacy of warfare as a political tool.

The stories of La Maddukelleng and La Pakka are presented in two sets of sources. The first is the rich and varied corpus of Bugis historical sources written in the Bugis language with an Indic-based syllabary on European paper. Known as *lontaraq*, these include *adat* (customary

1. Kathryn Anderson Wellen, *The Open Door: Early Modern Wajorese Statecraft and Diaspora* (De Kalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2014): Chapter 4.
2. James Brooke, *Narrative of Events in Borneo and Celebes down to the Occupation of Labuan* (London: John Murray, 1848): 1.89.
3. J. Noorduyn, “Een Boeginees geschriftje over Arung Singkang”, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 109.2 (1953): 144–52; J. Noorduyn, “Arung Singkang (1700–1765): How the Victory of Wadjo’ Began.” *Indonesia* 13 (1972): 61–68; Zainal Abidin and Alam, “La Maddukelleng, Pahlawan jang tak kenal menyerah”, *Bingkisan* 1.9 (1967): 25–31; 1.10 (1968): 28–31; 1.11 (1968): 28–32; 1.12 (1968): 27–31; 1.13 (1968): 27–31; 1.14 (1968): 31–36; 1.15 (1968): 32–36; Nur Asiah, *Ensiklopedia Pahlawan Nasional Indonesia* (Jakarta: Mediantara, 2009): 65.

law) registers, treaties, diaries and chronicles. While not all Bugis lands have their own chronicle, Wajoq has several different versions. The most extensive of these is the *Lontaraq Sukkuqna Wajoq* (*Complete Chronicle of Wajoq*, hereafter *LSW*). This lengthy document exhibits the typically Bugis preoccupation with objectivity and an exceptional attention to detail. It must be remembered, however, that it is a post-facto historical source designed to portray Wajoq in a favorable light. While much of the information contained within the *LSW* is unavailable anywhere else, it is perhaps less reliable than shorter Bugis documents describing individual historical episodes. The second set of sources is the archives of the United (Dutch) East India Company (VOC). During its two-century presence in Indonesia it made copious notes about local political and economic conditions and collected the letters it exchanged with local rulers. While written from a particular viewpoint in the case of Dutch reports, or translated from the indigenous language in the case of local rulers' letters, these sources have the advantage of having been written shortly after the events that they describe. Both sets of sources are authoritative in their own way and together they provide a view of highly localized indigenous practices of warfare in early modern South Sulawesi.

Both the indigenous and European sources pertaining to the Pénéki War are very concerned with the balance of power on the peninsula. They do not always specify the means by which attacks were made, but the overall picture is of limited warfare with a heavy reliance on arson. Ships, cannon and muskets may have been decisive in individual battles but the war only came to a conclusion when all of the involved parties were exasperated. Endurance and respect for *adat* seem to have played just as critical a role as technology.

Wajorese political structure

Writing in 1669, the Dutch Admiral Cornelis Speelman described Wajoq as "a number of small kingdoms or lands, bound to each other ... but with their own freedoms since time immemorial"⁴ This statement points to the confederative nature of the Wajorese polity that continued in practical terms until colonization in 1906. It consisted of three main districts or

4. The National Archives of the Netherlands, The Hague (hereafter NA), VOC 1276, Report of Cornelis Speelman in Makassar to the High Government in Batavia, 16 February 1670, fol. 873.



Figure 2.1: Map of Wajoq (by the author and Ian Caldwell)

limpo, namely Talotenreng, Tua and Béttémpola. These are the original heart of Wajoq known as the *Tellukkajurué*. Each of these *limpo* had their own sub-districts or vassals known as *lili* that were smaller communities that either chose to align themselves with the main districts or were conquered. Each sub-district had its own leader who was loyal to the leader of the main district who was in turn loyal to the paramount ruler of Wajoq, the *Arung Matoa*. The chain of loyalties ran from the leader of a village to the leader of a *lili* to the leader of the *limpo* to the leader of Wajoq. These chains of loyalties could also be extended overseas. In terms of warfare this meant that the strength of the diaspora could be harnessed for the acquisition of weapons, gunpowder and ammunition.⁵

5. Wellen, *The Open Door*, 76.

When accompanied by a ruler who encouraged target practice, as was the case with La Saléwangeng (r. 1715–1736), the presence of firearms might have actually facilitated political centralization within Wajoq.

While this sort of chain of loyalties was typical among Bugis kingdoms, in Wajoq it was enshrined within an especially complex governmental structure that reflected Wajoq's confederative nature. Wajoq was formally run by a council of officials numbering forty lords, hence the numerical name *Arung Patampulu* that only met on special occasions. Its core consisted of the *Arung Matoa* and the *Petta Ennengng*, meaning "Six Lords", who together formed Wajoq's highest ruling council known as the *Petta Wajoq*. The *Petta Ennengng* consisted of two officers for each *limpo*: a regent known as a *ranreng*, and an army chief called *Pabbaté Lompo* or *Baté Lompo* or simply *Baté*, which literally means banner. With army chiefs holding such key positions in the government, it is immediately apparent that the military played an important role in statecraft. The titles of the army chiefs originated from the color of the banner that they carry: *Pilla* (scarlet), *Patola* (multi-colored) and *Cakkoridi* (yellow). In theory, the rulers of the three divisions had the same rank, but it appears that in practice the *Petta Pilla* was the chief commander during war, and the *Petta Béttémpola* was the highest ranking during peace time. In addition to the *Petta Ennengng*, there were other officials belonging to each *limpo*: a courier known as a *suro* for conveying messages; four *Arung Mabbicara* or deliberating judges, charged with solving problems relating to *adat*; and six *Arung Paddokki-rokki*, or deliberators. The *Arung Patampulu* met to discuss and debate politics and *adat* and through this sort of meeting they guided the course of Wajorese politics. Other Bugis lands had similar councils and there were also interstate councils. These councils and their deliberative process were a very important aspect of Bugis statecraft.

Outside of this political structure there were other lands that were sometimes considered part of Wajoq. For example, the lands to the north known as Pitumpanua ("The Seven Lands") were periodically loyal to Wajoq but not formally represented in the *Arung Patampulu*. Other constituents were only indirectly represented, such as Paria, which had its own government and own *arung* or ruler underneath the jurisdiction of the *Ranreng Béttémpola*.⁶

6. Christian Pelras, "Hiérarchie et pouvoir traditionnels en pays Wadjo", *Archipel* 3 (1972): 218–23.

Whereas such a representative system had the potential to promote unity, the federative nature of Wajoq could also be a source of strife. The issue of which *lili* belonged to which *limpo* was not only a source of contention but also the cause of numerous civil wars. This is because traditional Bugis politics were deeply concerned with the balance of power in which both followers and rice lands played a role.

Bugis Politics

Wajoq was but one of numerous countries forming the political kaleidoscope of South Sulawesi. The peninsula's most renowned countries, Gowa, Luwuq, and Boné, are known collectively as *Cappagalaé* or the Big Three. Most of these countries are, in terms of multi-linear cultural evolution, complex chiefdoms, the exception being the twin Makassarese polities of Gowa-Talloq that formed a state from the beginning of the seventeenth century until it was taken over by the Dutch in 1667.⁷

The main thread running through the peninsula's political history as presented in the kaleidoscope of Bugis sources is the struggle of the various polities to improve their position in a hierarchy of polities. One reflection of this is the frequent mention of communities switching sides in anticipation of, during, or in the aftermath of wars. The political allegiance of even small communities is noted in detail. Chronicles mention an attack or a maneuver in one sentence and then the subsequent section will list the communities that defect. Then the narrative will do the same with the following attack or maneuver. As this makes for very dry reading, it is unlikely to be a literary device used to maintain tempo. Rather, these lists appear to be statements of belonging, reflections of the process through which warfare built communities and dissolved others. Because they attest to a polity's size and strength, they are also indicative of the relative position of any given polity within the hierarchy of polities. This is important in the context of South Sulawesi because the societies on this peninsula were and are very status conscious. The importance of status is reflected not only in personal relationships be-

7. Francis David Bulbeck, "A Tale of Two Kingdoms: The Historical Archaeology of Gowa and Tallok, South Sulawesi, Indonesia" (Ph.D. diss., Australian National University, 1988): 469–72 and Francis David Bulbeck, "Review of *A Chain of Kings: The Makassarese Chronicles of Gowa and Talloq* by William P. Cummings, ed. and trans.," *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs* 42.1 (2008): 207–20.

tween individuals but also in political relationships between the various polities on the peninsula.⁸

An important means of establishing relationships between polities was the conclusion of treaties. These could result from warfare or deliberation. They were very explicit, establishing both the precise relationship between the signatories and their mutual responsibilities.⁹ Treaties were concluded in official ceremonies and were considered to obligate not only the concluding parties but also their descendants. As such, treaties were an enduring means of determining the participating polities' position within the balance of power.¹⁰ Rather than being invalidated, treaties just waned in importance according to new political situations.¹¹ This sometimes meant that political actors had more than one treaty to choose from as they struggled over their position within the hierarchy of polities. Indeed, the profusion of treaties and alliances could even create pretexts for personality-based conflicts and localized forms of warfare that likely had their roots in a pre-Islamic past.

There were two main treaties that resurfaced during the Wajorese political strife of the mid-eighteenth century. The first was the Treaty of Timurung concluded in 1582 that established the *Tellumpocco* or "three peaks" referring to Boné, Soppéng and Wajoq. Basically, a defensive alliance against Gowa it also regulated the balance of power between the three lands. Territory was actually given to Soppéng so that it would be strong enough to conclude the treaty on equal terms with Boné and Wajoq. This treaty was so important that it was still invoked centuries later. Even so, however, it did not supersede the previous arrangements

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8. The classic works on status in South Sulawesi are H. J. Friedericy, "De standen bij de Boeginezen en Makassaren", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 90 (1933): 447–602, and H. Th. Chabot, *Kinship, Status and Gender in South Celebes* (Leiden: KITLV, 1996). More recent works include Susan Bolyard Millar, *Bugis Weddings: Rituals of Social Location in Modern Indonesia* (Berkeley: Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, 1989); Lucie van Mens, *De Statusscheppers: Sociale Mobiliteit in Wajo, 1905–1950* (Amsterdam: Centre for Asian Studies, 1989).
 9. Leonard Y. Andaya, "Treaty Conceptions and Misconceptions: A Case Study from South Sulawesi", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 134 (1978): 280–81.
 10. Here it must be noted that David Bulbeck's research on the Makassar twin kingdoms of Gowa and Talloq has revealed that marriage was a more enduring way to form a political alliance. (Bulbeck, "A Tale of Two Kingdoms": 121.
 11. Andaya, "Treaty Conceptions and Misconceptions": 284.

with Gowa through which Wajoq had become a vassal of Gowa. The second treaty was the Bungaya Treaty. This was concluded in 1667 during the Makassar War in which the combined forces of Boné and the Dutch conquered Gowa. It essentially undermined the government of Gowa and paved the way for Boné to assume a paramount position in the peninsula.¹² A subsequent treaty concluded between the Dutch and the Wajorese in 1670 disadvantaged Wajoq and may have indirectly contributed to Boné's rise during the last third of the seventeenth century.¹³ In addition to these larger-scale treaties, there were smaller-scale treaties and other political arrangements between the kaleidoscope of Bugis polities. Examples include the treaty of mutual respect that Sawitto made with Boné and the oral agreement about property rights that Sawitto reached with Makassar.¹⁴

It was around the start of the eighteenth century that a charismatic Wajorese young man named La Maddukelleng left Sulawesi. According to the *LSW*, La Maddukelleng was attending a cockfight when an argument arose. A Boneán threw the head of a cock and it hit the Wajorese *arung matoa*. La Maddukelleng was so insulted that he stabbed the offending Boneán, thereby starting a brawl in which 34 people were killed. When the *arumponé*, as the paramount leader of Boné is known, requested that La Maddukelleng be sent to Boné for judgement, the *arung matoa* said that he had not returned to Wajoq, and that according to the Treaty of Timurung, Boné had to believe Wajoq on this matter. Nevertheless La Maddukelleng feared that Boné would attack Wajoq because of him, so he decided to flee and seek his fortune elsewhere.¹⁵

During the early eighteenth century Wajoq's fortunes also started to change. Through a combination of efforts in Wajoq and elsewhere, Wajorese commerce grew to such an extent that Wajoq was able to

12. Boné assumed its paramount position under the charismatic leadership of Arung Palakka La Tenritatta and held it for decades. Upon his death in 1696, however, no Boneán leader could match his ability. By the 1710s, Boné was plagued by political instability. See Andaya, *The Heritage of Arung Palakka*: 114–16 and 305–07.

13. Wellen, *The Open Door*: 35.

14. Stephen C. Druce, *The Lands West of the Lakes: A History of the Ajattappareng Kingdoms of South Sulawesi 1200 to 1600 CE* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2009): 84–85.

15. *Lontaraq Sukkuqna Wajoq* (hereafter *LSW*). Proyek Naskah Unhas No.01/MKH/1/Unhas UP Rol 73, No. 1–12, 230–31.

refortify.¹⁶ Eventually it overtook Boné in the hierarchy of states. This is evidenced in statements made in 1737 by the Dutch Governor Johan Sautijn to the effect that Boné had declined into a weak state during the past 25–30 years, while Wajoq was on the rise.¹⁷ It is during this prosperous period, however, that an intense period of civil and military conflict began in Wajoq. This period started with the return of La Maddukelleng to Wajoq in 1735, and lasted until his death three decades later.

La Maddukelleng and the Dutch

Whether he was recalled by Wajoq or returned on his own volition,¹⁸ La Maddukelleng came back to South Sulawesi in the early 1730s. According to Dutch reports, he married in Mandar on the west coast of Sulawesi and established a base there. From this base he then launched attacks on West Torajan communities such as Kaili in 1730, 1731 and 1732.¹⁹ Bugis sources have slightly different versions of his arrival in Sulawesi. One mentions a fleet of 40 ships enabling La Maddukelleng's victory; another recounts a 75-day siege.²⁰ In 1735, he also made his presence felt off the coast of Makassar, burning houses on the islands near the coast.²¹ Setting communities on fire appears from Bugis manuscripts to have been one of La Maddukelleng's favorite techniques²² and he quickly earned a reputation for violence. In March 1736, the Dutch ordered an attack against La Maddukelleng and his companion ToAssa but it was unsuccessful and the two leaders were able to escape under the cover of darkness.²³

From Makassar, La Maddukelleng proceeded up the east coast of the peninsula to the coast of Boné. When he tried to go ashore, he was

16. Wellen, *The Open Door*: 67–87.

17. NA, VOC 2409, Memorandum of Johan Sautijn to his successor Adriaan Smout, Makassar, 14 October 1737, especially fols. 178 and 244.

18. Sources are contradictory, even self-contradictory.

19. NA, VOC 2285, Memorandum of Josua van Arrewijne to his successor Johan Sautijn, Makassar, 21 May 1733, fol. 137.

20. J. Noorduyn, *Een Achttiende-Eeuwse Kroniek van Wadjo': Buginese Historiografie*, ('s-Gravenage: H. L. Smits, 1955): 128.

21. Memorandum of Sautijn to Smout: 192.

22. Leid Cod Or 1923 VI, (Leiden University Library, Leiden) for example, mentions this technique repeatedly.

23. Memorandum of Sautijn to Smout: 194.

forbidden from doing so. The *arumponé* and the Seven Lords of Boné convened to discuss the situation. They considered it senseless to engage him in battle at sea.²⁴ Presumably this was because La Maddukelleng was better equipped for naval warfare than the agricultural kingdoms from which he originated. According to one Bugis source, his fleet included 37 ships of outstanding quality.²⁵ Therefore, instead of being attacked at sea, La Maddukelleng was made to wait for 40 days off the coast of Doping after which he was permitted to go ashore on the condition that he submit himself to trial by the *Tellumpocco*. He agreed and proceeded to Tosora where he was tried and acquitted by the *Tellumpocco*.²⁶

From Tosora, La Maddukelleng proceeded to Pénéki where he was inaugurated as Arung Pénéki, or ruler of Pénéki, and asked the Bonéans to leave. This precipitated a war with Boné. The Bonéans' first response was to invade Pénéki, and their second was to burn other places in Wajoq. Described in the *lontaraq* as Bonéan aggression, these retaliatory acts proved to be a strategic mistake. As a result, many Wajorese joined forces with La Maddukelleng and Boné was no longer fighting just La Maddukelleng but rather the Wajorese population. One Bugis text provides particular details about this phase of the conflict. It mentions the burning of villages, decapitations, the death of La Maddukelleng's son to Sibengngareng, and the seizure of the flag of Témpe, a place in Wajoq.²⁷

The following year, La Maddukelleng assumed leadership of Wajoq. It is unclear exactly how he did this. Letters from Arung Timurung and Datu Baringeng to the Dutch say that his predecessor La Saléwangeng was dethroned.²⁸ Usurpation would certainly not be out of line with La Maddukelleng's character and previous activities. However, Wajorese sources say that he resigned. According to the Wajorese Chronicles (*LSW*), La Saléwangeng suggested that La Maddukelleng would be a more appropriate leader to help Wajoq with wars. This is unusual because

24. J. Noorduyn, "Arung Singkang (1700–1765) How the Victory of Wadjo' began", *Indonesia* 13 (1972): 68.

25. Leid Cod Or 1923 VI, fol. 10.

26. The details of the trial are available in Noorduyn, "Arung Singkang", and J. Noorduyn, "Een Boeginees geschriftje over Arung Singkang", 144–52.

27. Leid Cod Or 1923 VI, fols. 10–14.

28. NA, VOC 2409, Letter from Datu Baringeng to Johan Sautijn, Wednesday 8 Saban 1736, fols. 748–49.

ostensibly Wajorese leaders were chosen for their fairness, sociability, eloquence and wisdom. The chronicle continues to relate that the Wajorese population objected to La Saléwangeng's resignation saying that it was only during his reign that Wajoq prospered, and they asked him to designate a grandchild who would be appropriate to replace him. He chose La Maddukelleng. La Maddukelleng agreed and La Saléwangeng continued in an advisory position until he died eight years later²⁹ at which point he was given the posthumous name *Lesoé ripaatujunna*, meaning "he who abdicated during his duties". The discrepancy between the contemporary Bugis sources preserved in archives of the VOC and the post-facto account contained in the *LSW* may reflect hesitation on behalf of the chronicler to portray La Maddukelleng in a negative light.

As *arung matoa*, La Maddukelleng sought to liberate Wajoq from all oppressors.³⁰ He encouraged the populace to take up arms against Wajoq's enemies, launched attacks on northern Boné and sought reimbursement of the money, people and goods seized by Boné in 1670. Presumably, in light of these military attacks, in mid-1737 an agreement was reached for Boné and Soppéng to compensate Wajoq in installments for the losses that Wajoq had incurred at the hands of Arung Palakka (and Arung Belo) after the Makassar War. The *LSW* records that Boné not only approved this arrangement, but also said it was God's will that Wajoq lead the *Tellumpocco*.³¹ Wajoq assumed an unprecedented position of power and part of northern Boné became Wajorese, attesting to the increase in Wajorese influence on the peninsula.

La Maddukelleng also wanted to expel the Dutch from South Sulawesi. After two years of planning, he set out for Makassar. When his companions doubted their chances for success, La Maddukelleng replied: "It is alright if you the *Tellumpocco* return to your village because you do not want to go and wage war. The Dutch in Ujung Pandang only number 500 soldiers and we number 500 as well. Just let me go attack them. Hopefully I can expel them from Ujung Pandang."³² While some of his forces retreated, La Maddukelleng finally launched his attack on

29. Muhammad Salim (ed.), *Lontarak Wajo*, Vol. III (Ujung Pandang: Pemerintah Daerah Tingkat I Sulawesi Selatan, 1980): 381–82.

30. *Ibid.*: 383.

31. *Ibid.*: 391.

32. *Ibid.*: 399.

Makassar in May 1739. This campaign lasted for several weeks. Without sufficient Bonéan and Gowan support, however, he ultimately failed. A year and a half later the Dutch launched a counter attack which was a tiresome campaign resulting in a Pyrrhic victory for the Dutch. Whereas Wajorese records state that the Dutch walked away from negotiations, Dutch sources record that a verbal agreement was reached in March 1741. Among other things, it stipulated that the Bungaya Treaty was renewed and that Wajoq would leave Timurung to the Bonéans. Since the Wajorese refused to sign it, however, the agreement was essentially an honorable retreat for the Dutch. Wajoq's position remained largely the same.³³

La Maddukelleng and the Wajorese

The withdrawal of the Dutch was not, however, the end of violence in Wajoq. On the contrary, La Maddukelleng initiated a period of civil conflict that lasted for decades. A mere three days after the Dutch left Tosora, he sent his guards to punish the communities that had abandoned Wajoq during its conflict with the Dutch.³⁴ He fined some communities and denigrated others to the status of "children" of Wajoq. Such punishments likely exacerbated tensions and internal dissent in Wajoq.

A major conflict during this contentious period pertained to the relationship between Wajoq and its vassals Pammana and Sidénréng. Pammana was located in western Cenrana valley in the southern part of Wajoq. Sidénréng lay to the northwest of Wajoq and it was also part of the Ajattappareng confederation on the western side of the peninsula. The conflict between Wajoq and these vassals is portrayed as very personal in the Bugis sources. It was personified in a dispute between La Maddukelleng and the Datu Pammana by the name of La Gau who also held the office of *pilla* of Wajoq. Whereas La Gau had displayed exceptional bravery in La Maddukelleng's attack against the Dutch in 1739, in the 1740s he incited Sidénréng against Wajoq. His brother-in-law, La Wawo, was the ruler or *addatuang* of Sidénréng and La Gau wanted to ensure that his relatives maintained their influential positions. Flexing his muscles to emphasize his strength, La Gau insisted that nobody out-

33. Noorduyin, *Een Achttiende-Eeuwse Kroniek van Wadjo'*, 138.

34. Unfortunately, the sources are not specific as to how this was done.

side his family would rule Sidénréng as long as he lived. Arung Bénténg³⁵ urged La Gau not to create problems in Wajoq, but it was too late. La Maddukelleng was angered and refused to accept Sidénréng's surrender or its attempts to make amends. Instead he insisted that someone other than La Wawo be appointed as the ruler of Sidénréng on that very day, or otherwise La Maddukelleng would attack Sidénréng the next day.

Sidénréng's next move was especially interesting. When the situation was deliberated, not enough council members to make a decision were available on such short notice. Those that were present decided to try to abide by La Maddukelleng's wishes but the *addatuang* insisted that deciding without a quorum was against custom. Thus, Sidénréng preferred battle to the abandonment of its *adat*.

The armed conflict between Sidénréng and Wajoq lasted for more than eight months. Eventually, however, Sidénréng and Pammana sought reconciliation, at which point the relative gravity of La Maddukelleng's and La Gau's crimes were debated. La Gau was accused of undermining the *arung matoa*, which as other Bugis sources confirm, was considered improper.³⁶ In this case, however, La Gau was not considered totally unjustified because La Maddukelleng was accused of arbitrary behavior. At this moment, however, La Maddukelleng was still *arung matoa* and held the upper hand. He insisted that La Gau's crimes could not be exonerated through the payment of a fine and that he must be executed or exiled. The opinions of the Wajorese population were split, with some people believing that La Gau should be fined ten *kati* and other people agreeing with La Maddukelleng. While this was still being debated, La Maddukelleng shot at La Gau who fled to Sékkanasu, probably to the south of Wajoq. Thereafter not only Sidénréng but also Sékkanasu became the object of La Maddukelleng's rage. Then, when Sékkanasu tried to ally with Pammana, and when La Gau stabbed the representative of the *cakkuridi* who was also La Maddukelleng's wife in Pammana, Wajoq also attacked Pammana. Wajoq enforced a blockade "as tight as a

35. Bénténg was the former palace center of Rappang that was another part of Ajattappareng north of Sidénréng.

36. NBG-Boeg 125, (Dutch Bible Society Collection, Leiden University Library, Leiden) fols. 108-25.

ring circles a finger"³⁷ and for six months the people of Pammana were unable to procure provisions.

Despite La Maddukelleng's hostility towards Sidenreng, Sékkanasu and Pammana, La Gau did not want to capitulate. Instead of continuing the armed conflict, however, La Gau and his wife Datu Watu opted for another tactic. They tried to make peace with La Maddukelleng by proposing a marriage between their relative and the sister of Arung Bénténg who was an ally of La Maddukelleng. Arung Bénténg agreed to the request and the marriage occurred a month later, but even such a family bond was not enough to end the dispute between La Gau and La Maddukelleng. Thereafter Arung Bénténg encouraged La Gau to ask La Maddukelleng's pardon one more time, promising that if forgiveness were still not granted, then they would launch a joint attack against La Maddukelleng. La Gau followed this advice and this time La Maddukelleng accepted his apology.³⁸

Another dispute during this period pertained to Mojong, a community north of Lake Sidénréng that had traditionally been part of both Belawa and Sidénréng. People from both Belawa and Sidénréng wanted the right to plant gardens in this area, and they repeatedly fought over this right until someone was wounded or killed. Thereafter the victor would tend the land and his or her opponent would retreat. This scenario was repeated until it came to be considered a tradition. Nevertheless, at a certain point the rivals from Belawa and Sidénréng considered the possibility that they should fight less and they agreed to seek arbitration. According to Wajorese sources, the rivals first sought arbitration in Lima Ajattappareng but Lima Ajattappareng referred them to Wajoq. In Wajoq the deliberations were the subject of considerable public interest and both sides of the story were heard repeatedly. Thereafter it was decided to consult the *lontaraq*. In the middle of this process, however, La Maddukelleng decided unilaterally that Mojong was part of Belawa and he granted compensation to Belawa thereby engendering envy among the people of Sidénréng. The population was infuriated because La Maddukelleng showed such disregard for the deliberation process

37. Muhammad Salim (ed.), *Lontarak Wajo*, 426.

38. Ibid.: 436–37 and 442–43. For an alternate version in which peace is concluded after a month of negotiations, see Noorduyin, *Een Achtiende-Eeuwse Kroniek van Wadjo'*: 306–09.

and, by extension, for Wajorese *adat*.³⁹ It demonstrates not only the population's respect for *adat* but also their preference for deliberation over warfare.

The dispute over Mojong is also significant because it was a turning point in La Maddukelleng's career. After angering the Wajorese population with his autarchic decision, La Maddukelleng gradually lost their support. When he tried to attack Sidénréng again and failed for lack of followers, he relinquished his title in 1754 in the middle of a military campaign. One *lontaraq* records him as saying: "You appointed me on the battlefield to be *arung matoa* but if you don't want me to lead wars, then take Wajoq back on the field."⁴⁰ He was replaced by La Maddanaca (r. 1754–1755), who, like La Maddukelleng, was selected for his military abilities. Thus even despite the population's preference for deliberation, the importance of military skills for leadership in this period is clear.

La Maddukelleng as Arung Pénéki

Even after leaving the office of *arung matoa*, La Maddukelleng still retained the office of *arung Pénéki*. As such he tried to influence Wajorese politics and wrote a letter to the Wajorese council. He promised that he would never harm Wajoq as long as he lived and argued that punishing him for breaking Wajorese customs was paramount to ruining Wajoq. He also warned the Wajorese against Pilla La Gau and his outside influences. Because opinion among its members was split,⁴¹ the Wajorese council responded with apparent difficulty. In their reply they declared their desire for Wajoq's prosperity and their allegiance to Wajorese *adat*. They emphasized that decisions regarding Wajoq are not made unilaterally and urged La Maddukelleng to abide by Wajorese agreements. The debate created tremendous anxiety within the Wajorese government. Eventually La Maddanaca's successor La Passawung stepped down as *arung matoa* because Wajoq was losing vassals.⁴² Pammana remained technically loyal but harbored its own expansionist plans. Pilla La Gau

39. Muhammad Salim (ed.), *Lontarak Wajo*, 448–49.

40. *Bunga Rampai Lontaraq*, Proyek Naskah Unhas, No. 01/MKH/27/Unhas/UP Rol 34, No. 27, 124–25.

41. Patola, Cakkuridi and Ranreng Tellotenreng sided with La Maddukelleng; and Arung Bénténg, Ranreng Tua and Pilla sided with Arung Matoa La Passawung.

42. Muhammad Salim (ed.), *Lontarak Wajo*: 455.

was making plans to expand Pammana's government by having three divisions, each with three subordinates. He met resistance, however, from the council of Pammana which feared such a modification would be inappropriate because Pammana was subordinate to Wajoq.⁴³

The Dutch were also growing anxious. Similar to indigenous political leaders, the Dutch were concerned with the balance of power in South Sulawesi and in particular the relative influence of Boné. They wanted to maintain the position of authority in Makassar that they had obtained during the late 1660s with the help of Boné. Since they considered themselves to have had no other trustworthy ally in the peninsula, any perceived decline in Boné's power made them nervous. They believed that La Maddukelleng and his band of robbers, as well as disturbances from the Wajorese constituents, except Pammana, were the main causes of Bonéan poverty and troubles. The Dutch were also very concerned about Wajorese attempts at renewing their alliance with the Makassarese and Wajorese demands for Timurung.⁴⁴

During this contentious period, La Maddukelleng's son La Pakka stole the horse of the *arumponé*⁴⁵ La Temmassongé Arung Baringeng (r. 1749–1775). La Pakka also pillaged parts of Boné. Just as had been done decades earlier when La Maddukelleng started a brawl, Boné requested that the person responsible, in this case La Pakka, be handed over to the *arumponé*. When La Maddukelleng refused, Boné retaliated by attacking Pénéki. This escalated into the Pénéki War.

Boné attacked Pénéki for more than a year, at which point there was an attempt at negotiation. When this failed, the war continued for two more years. Unable to conclude peace within the *Tellumpocco*, the *arumponé* sought help from the Dutch. He visited Governor Cornelis Sinkelaar and said that the Dutch were obliged to spring in and mediate and help the Bonéans bring the Wajorese to reason. When Sinkelaar replied that this was not the VOC's responsibility, the *arumponé* chastised him for his unfriendliness.⁴⁶ Ultimately, the Dutch lent assistance

43. Ibid.: 456.

44. R. Blok, *History of the Island of Celebes* (Calcutta: Calcutta Gazette Press, 1817): 3–7.

45. Muhammad Salim (ed.), *Lontarak Wajo*: 457.

46. NA, VOC 3216, Memorandum of C. Sinkelaar to his successor D. Boelen, 28 February 1767, fol. 39.

in the form of supplies and loans. While the Dutch were not combatants themselves, they were sufficiently interested in the proceedings of the war between Boné and Pénéki to record details, which two and a half centuries later offer insights into early modern Bugis warfare as well as the concerns of their allies the Bonéans.

The Pénéki War

The Dutch in Makassar were very concerned about the Pénéki War because it appeared that the longer the war continued, the weaker Boné grew. However, the Dutch became frustrated with the Bonéans for not fighting wholeheartedly. They believed that Pénéki could be conquered if only the Bonéans were daring enough but that instead the Bonéans “wanted to fetch water without getting wet”.⁴⁷ Bonéan unwillingness to fight is exemplified by their argument that they could not attack Pénéki because they had not received the straw they had been promised, whereas there was straw readily available on the ground.⁴⁸

From the perspective of the *arumponé*, however, the war was not so simple. Straw for setting fires may have been there for the taking but he had difficulty raising funds for other sorts of offensives. He repeatedly told the Dutch that he did not have any provisions and that he must borrow from the Company.⁴⁹ Another complication was political dissent within Boné. While some of the dissent related to the war, with the *arumponé*'s own children not understanding why he was so committed to it, there were also other rifts.

One dispute related to the succession to the position of *arumponé*. Arumponé La Temmassongé wanted his son, Arung Ta, to succeed him as the ruler of Boné but Arung Mampu was considered to be a more capable, cleverer ruler. This rivalry resulted in Arung Ta deserting Arung Mampu on the battlefield. They had agreed to make an attack

47. The National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia, Jakarta (hereafter ANRI), Makassar 280, *Stukken handelende over den Panekischen Oorlog*, Letter from the captain of the Malays Abdul Cadier to Cornelis Sinkelaar, 2 March 1762, unpaginated.

48. ANRI, Makassar 280, *Stukken handelende over den Panekischen Oorlog*, Letter from the *Arumponé* received 2 April 1762, unpaginated.

49. ANRI, Makassar 280, *Stukken handelende over den Panekischen Oorlog*, Report of the Captain of the Malays regarding what he saw and heard during his stay with the Bonéan army, undated, unpaginated.

together but when the fighting became intense, Arung Ta abandoned Arung Mampu to the enemy. Aware of this treachery, Arung Mampu exerted extra caution and he and his forces did not succumb. He and his followers resolved that, even though they were allies, they should not put themselves in danger for each other.⁵⁰ The fact that leaders such as Arung Ta and Arung Mampu each had their own followers, complete with their own forces, made it very difficult for the *arumponé* to wage a coordinated war effort. This difficulty was also apparent in the desire of certain leaders to use the battlefield as a platform for demonstrating their bravery. At one point the *arumponé* chastised Arung Mampu for making an unauthorized attack.

Politics aside, the *arumponé* also had financial difficulties. According to one report, Boné's military supplies consisted of 13 cannon, 1,000 handguns and 2,000 men. Limited in terms of supplies, the Bonéans employed low-resource tactics. One such tactic was trying to starve the enemy out, a common practice in Bugis warfare. Yet here again, dissent posed problems. Two Bonéan messengers provided the Pénékians with rice. Not having caught the traitors in the act, the Bonéans could not prevent this.⁵¹ Furthermore, the Bonéans were usually powerless to prevent the Wajorese from receiving reinforcements from their diasporic communities in Sumbawa, Timor and Pasir. From the moment La Maddukelleng had returned to Sulawesi, the Bonéans had been concerned about the strength of his ships and troops, which – according to the Bonéan emissary – were not Wajorese.⁵² How this emissary defined Wajorese is not recorded in the sources, but it is clear that the Wajorese received reinforcements from their compatriots overseas on numerous occasions during the eighteenth century.⁵³

In at least one instance, however, the Bonéans might have been able to prevent the Pénékians from obtaining reinforcements but they chose not to. This was when a wife of Arung Pénéki led a group of women

50. Report of the Captain of the Malays, unpaginated.

51. ANRI, Makassar 280, *Stukken handelende over den Panekischen Oorlog*, Letter to Cornelis Sinkelaar, 28 February 1762, unpaginated.

52. Leid Cod Or 1923 VI, fol. 10.

53. NA, VOC 2409, Letter from Arung Timurung to Governor Johan Sautijn, 9 May 1736, f. 771; Leid Cod Or 1923 VI: 15; ANRI, Makassar 280, *Stukken handelende over den Panekischen Oorlog*, Letter from Brugman to Gov. Sinkelaar, 4 March 1762, unpaginated.

on an expedition to fetch gunpowder from Wajoq. When they returned to Pénéki at dusk, a group of combatants accompanied them, shooting to the right and the left. The Bonéans dared not fire back for fear of escalating violence.⁵⁴ Preventing a convoy of women from transporting gunpowder overland is different from preventing mariners from importing weapons from overseas. Furthermore, the relative strength of the forces is not clear from the sources. The Wajorese had an unparalleled overseas network that provided them with munitions and manpower, but the Bonéans received help from the Dutch. Nevertheless the incident exemplifies the Bonéan reluctance to use force which frustrated the Dutch.

Despite the help they received from the Dutch, the Bonéans employed inexpensive techniques. In addition to trying to starve out the enemy, the Bonéans also set fires. This tactic was not always successful. One report describes how the Bonéans stacked dry grass around Pénéki with the intention of setting it aflame as soon as there was a favorable wind that would facilitate burning Pénéki down. Yet the Wajorese beat them at their own game and lit this grass when the wind was blowing in a way that the fire and smoke went towards the Bonéans. While the Bonéans choked in the smoke, the Wajorese climbed up on the top of their palisades and mocked them.⁵⁵ Literally teasing the enemy was possible because of the proximity in which Bugis forces sometimes built their fortifications. In this case it appears that the Wajorese mocked the Bonéans from an elevated vantage point but in other instances movable stockades were built so close to enemy forts that the adversaries could even touch each other.⁵⁶

The Dutch grew increasingly impatient to put an end to this war and they corresponded extensively with Boné about the best way to do so. They wanted to reinstate the Bungaya Treaty and were even willing to exclude several clauses, especially those that restricted freedom of navigation and Wajorese alliances with Gowa. They seemed to think that they could convince Wajoq to accept these conditions but Wajoq

54. Report of the Captain of the Malays, unpaginated.

55. Ibid.

56. G. Vermeulen, *De gedenkwaardige voyagie van Gerret Vermeulen naar Oost-Indien, in 't jaar 1668, aangevangen, en it 't jaar 1674 voltrokken*, Amsterdam: Jan Claesz, 1677: 66.

was more interested the renewal of the *Tellumpocco*. Despite the Dutch providing the Bonéans with material support, the Dutch were not able to contain this conflict as they hoped.

In Pénéki La Maddukelleng exhibited his usual tenacity. The *LSW* relates that, when a messenger tried to convince La Maddukelleng to give up, he refused to surrender. Instead he replied that he did not care if the *Tellumpocco* drove him to a state of desperation.⁵⁷ This corresponds with Dutch sources that report that the Pénékians would rather die than leave and that La Maddukelleng refused to surrender his house.⁵⁸ After numerous attacks and limited success, the Bonéans finally launched a devastating attack on Pénéki. La Maddukelleng's son La Tobo died, Pénéki was desperate and asked help from Wajoq. Wajoq complied. Wajoq also asked Pénéki to surrender La Pakka and La Maddukelleng agreed in word but then never delivered his son. This unfulfilled promise caused people to rebel against La Maddukelleng. Before this rebellion escalated, however, La Pakka died during another attack on Pénéki.⁵⁹

Sources relate two different resolutions to the Pénéki war. The *LSW* records that La Maddukelleng surrendered upon the death of his son La Pakka. La Maddukelleng is generally characterized as being exceptionally loathe to surrender, but in the mid-1760s he would have been an old man by contemporary standards. It is easy to imagine that he was tired, less resilient and more inclined to admit defeat. In any case, the *LSW* further relates that Boné was incredulous. Unconvinced that La Maddukelleng's surrender was sincere, Boné suggested testing his sincerity by asking him to return everything he stole. Wajoq considered this a breach of sovereignty and objected, saying that Pénéki was a vassal of Wajoq. The *Tellumpocco* acquiesced. This version spares Wajoq and La Maddukelleng further humiliation.⁶⁰

Contemporary sources relate a different story, however. In a letter to the VOC, the *arumponé* reports that La Maddukelleng wreaked such havoc that fishermen and traders did not dare to venture out on the

57. Muhammad Salim (ed.), *Lontarak Wajo*: 457.

58. ANRI, Makassar 280, *Stukken handelende over den Panekischen Oorlog*, Letter from captain of the Malays Abdul Cadier to Cornelis Sinkelaar, 04 March 1762, unpaginated.

59. Muhammad Salim (ed.), *Lontarak Wajo*: 457–59.

60. *Ibid.*, 460–61.

water. It continues to relate that Wajoq sent a large force that included some of the *Arung Patampulu* to Pénéki. This force killed two of La Maddukelleng's sons and set fire to Pénéki. The participation of some of the 40 lords is not surprising given that this council included three army chiefs. It is easy to imagine that this expedition was very well armed, but the text does not mention their use of firearms. Thereafter Boné succeeded in capturing La Maddukelleng. Wajoq then sent a messenger to Boné requesting the release of La Maddukelleng, and Boné complied. The Bonéans were not, however, as charitable with the population of Pénéki as they were with La Maddukelleng and they sold part of the people into slavery to repay their debt to the Dutch.⁶¹

Despite the significant differences in these stories, both versions agree about a crucial feature. That is that La Maddukelleng was eventually returned to Wajorese custody. This suggests a tremendous respect for the sovereignty of the constituents of the *Tellumpocco*, a respect that was maintained even during the aftermath of military conflicts.

Questions of justice

Leaders from Boné, Soppéng and Wajoq met in Timurung to discuss La Maddukelleng's manifold crimes and debate possibilities for punishment. A Bugis manuscript in Leiden University library⁶² provides a detailed, day-by-day account of this meeting. It is dated 1763 but the contents suggest that the meeting might have been later. Wrongdoings dating back almost three decades were discussed and there were so many that the participants in the meeting found it all but impossible to summarize them. Wajoq said that it had originally agreed with some of La Maddukelleng's offensives but not all. Boné then pointed out that previous rulers had also played a role in the conflicts in which La Maddukelleng became involved. It was agreed that Arung Palakka had failed to maintain the *Tellumpocco* alliance and that nobody had dared to remind him of the Treaty of Timurung because he aroused so much fear. The representatives adjourned and then reconvened to share the information contained in their *lontaraq*. The various parties had different recollections but eventually Wajoq declared that La Maddukelleng

61. ANRI, Makassar 280, *Stukken handelende over den Panekischen Oorlog*, Letter from the Ruler of Boné, October 1766, unpaginated.

62. NBG-Boeg 125.

had been a destructive force, having pillaged on land and sea and having been unwilling to compromise. Wajoq then offered to compensate for the damage La Maddukelleng had wreaked, but Boné retorted that remuneration was impossible. If La Maddukelleng had done nothing worse than steal, then Wajoq could pay back half of the value in jewels, but La Maddukelleng had committed a graver offense by breaking the *Tellumpocco* alliance. When Soppéng suggested that La Maddukelleng should be crushed with stones for treason, Boné questioned whether the pertinent customs of the three respective lands were the same. Boné continued that according to its own *adat*, rulers could not be contradicted, not even if they declared the polar opposite of the truth and called white black. Soppéng and Wajoq both responded that they had this same custom at which point the meeting was adjourned. At the concluding meeting Wajoq shared a message from the *arung matoa* to the *arumponé*. He suggested that it would be better to try to reach an agreement another day. Boné countered that if they adjourned, then Wajoq would have to take all of the blame for Pénéki upon itself. Wajoq did not object, however, and it was agreed to adjourn.

Although an agreement was never reached, the meeting may have been important for its reinforcement of a custom held in common by Boné, Soppéng and Wajoq: that the ruler was above the law and could not be prosecuted, not even for disregarding *adat* or pillaging. The record of the meeting also conclusively shattered the image of La Maddukelleng as a proto-nationalist who selflessly and tirelessly fought the Dutch. The text portrays him as war monger who may have killed many more Indonesians than Dutch. Opinions may have been split in Wajoq as to whose crimes were worse, La Maddukelleng's or La Gau's, but there was no disagreement as to the devastating effect that La Maddukelleng had had on Wajoq and the *Tellumpocco*.

At this point, the so-called Pénéki War was over. Peace was re-established in Boné and Wajoq relinquished its claim on Timurung. However, the debate about La Maddukelleng continued for several years. In 1764 or 1765, the *Tellumpocco* met again to discuss La Maddukelleng's wrongdoings and even his emotional state when he requested pardon. It was agreed that the issue was complex because of the office that he held. According to Wajoq, he asked for pardon and was therefore absolved. The *Tellumpocco* had a split opinion about this and the debate

raged on, including discussions about the proper ways of dealing with stolen property and statements about the value of the *Tellumpocco*. Five months after this inconclusive meeting La Maddukelleng died.⁶³

Conclusion

The Pénéki War raises a number of interesting issues about statecraft and sovereignty. First was the position of the paramount ruler. At the meeting of the *Tellumpocco* around 1763, all parties agreed that once a ruler was appointed, he or she could not be questioned: if the ruler called white black, then it was black. The effective corollary of this is that the paramount rulers are above justice. Thus La Maddukelleng was never punished, not with a fine, not with exile, and not with death. Possible punishments were discussed within Wajoq and the *Tellumpocco* for years but there is no record of La Maddukelleng ever being punished.

The second issue was the relationship between the constituent parts of Wajoq. Pénéki was a part of Wajoq. It was located about 18 kilometers from the Wajorese capital and there was a system of messengers built into the government. Nevertheless Pénéki acted independently. It attacked Boné and got help from Luwuq to do so while Wajoq stayed out of the conflict for two years. Then, when Wajoq did come to Pénéki's aid, it did so on a grand scale. The way in which Pénéki conducted itself doubtlessly had much to do with La Maddukelleng's personality but there was also a federative system in place that allowed constituent polities to act individually. Pénéki was part of Wajoq but it was independent as well.

The relationship between Pénéki and Wajoq exemplifies the layers and liaisons typical of indigenous statecraft in South Sulawesi. Wajoq was a vassal of Gowa, and an ally of Boné and Soppéng. Meanwhile Wajoq had three constituent parts and each had their own vassals. Furthermore there were other tributary relationships with neighboring polities and some of those neighboring polities were in mutual relationships as well.

This multi-faceted, multi-layered political landscape could facilitate prolonged periods of civil unrest, as it did in eighteenth century Wajoq. Not only did this system lend itself to very complicated civil wars, but also it enabled constituents of Wajoq to choose in which conflicts they

63. LSW: 327–28.

wanted to be involved, and even on which side. This possibility was further entrenched by the enduring nature of Bugis treaties which theoretically never expired but only receded into the political background, to be recalled as needed or desired. In such a political system, one sub-polity or another always had a conflict with its neighbor or could find an excuse to launch an attack. Such conflicts could influence broader politics, thereby resulting in escalating political turmoil such as the Pénéki War. Arguably, this multi-faceted, multi-layered system also created a very complex playing field on which personal conflicts, vendettas, and aggressive personalities were played out in the extreme. La Maddukelleng is one example, but there are others, for instance Arung Tanété La Odang a.k.a. the Mad Duke who waged war across the peninsula and reportedly ate the livers of his defeated enemies with salt.⁶⁴

This style of warfare is not unique to South Sulawesi. On the contrary, personal conflicts and small-scale warfare were widespread in Southeast Asia and beyond. What is unusual in the case of the Pénéki War, however, is the extent of details in the available evidence. The *LSW* is the most detailed of Bugis state chronicles and it deals extensively with local conflicts and the personalities involved. Meanwhile VOC archives contain not only Dutch intelligence reports but also letters from Bugis participants in the Pénéki War. Thus, despite the fact that the Pénéki War has hitherto largely escaped the attention of historians, the available documentation constitutes a historiographical treasure trove.

This very historiographical richness, however, may be misleading. The inclusion of small-scale conflicts in the *LSW*, an extremely detailed source, lends them an importance not accorded to the countless similar conflicts that presumably occurred on the same peninsula at the same time but so far have escaped the attention of historians. Meanwhile, the creation of an archive dedicated to the Pénéki War encourages viewing this long period of civil unrest as a war when it could easily be viewed as a string of conflicts instead. In turn, such strings of conflicts might be viewed as cycles or as episodes in an age-old style of warfare. Often ritual, this warfare was of cultural significance. It could serve not only to assert claims on resources or to enhance a community's status, but also to affirm an individual's prestige or to ensure a successful harvest.

64. Johan Splinter Stavorinus, *Voyages to the East-Indies* (London: G. G. and J. Robinson, 1798): 2: 221.

With such important roles, ritual warfare did not simply disappear with the advent of states and world religions. Such a lingering doubtlessly occurred elsewhere in the early modern world but is perhaps more visible in South Sulawesi due to historiographical accidents. Whether or not South Sulawesi's complex, multi-layered political landscape also facilitated the continuation of an indigenous style of warfare that pre-dated the advent of states awaits further research.

Kinship, Islam, and Raiding in Maguindanao, c. 1760–1780

Ariel C. Lopez

Introduction

The late eighteenth century was a dynamic period in the history of insular Southeast Asia. It marked the expansion of “indigenous” commerce and the consequent resurgence of various Malay-Indonesian polities. Indeed, Anthony Reid has called this the “second stage of trade expansion” that followed the initial “Age of Commerce” (1450–1680).¹ The period’s commercial and political dynamism was manifested strikingly, even if viciously, in the proliferation of maritime-based raiding. Although such raiding forays have traditionally been part of the formation of complex archipelagic chiefdoms,² the marked incidence of raids during this period is quite exceptional. The infamous maritime raids that fanned out for instance from Sulu and were documented by James Warren’s numerous works, are understood as a means to acquire slaves to gather export commodities as *trepang* (sea cucumber) and edible bird’s nests.³ But these raids, some recent studies

1. Anthony Reid, “Global and Local in Southeast Asian History”, *International Journal of Asian Studies* 1.1 (2004). See also: Leonard Blussé, “Changes of Regime and Colonial State Formation in the Malay Archipelago, 1780–1830 – an invitation to an international project” (ARI Working Paper No. 41: Asia Research Institute – Singapore, 2005).
2. Laura Lee Junker, *Raiding, Trading and Feasting: The Political Economy of Philippine Chiefdoms* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1999).
3. James Francis Warren, *The Sulu Zone, 1768–1898: The Dynamics of External Trade, Slavery and Ethnicity in the Transformation of a Southeast Asian Maritime State* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1981); idem, *Iranun and Balangingi*:

argue, were propelled more by a “deeper” cultural logic of competition for social pre-eminence than by any immediate economic need.⁴

While the scholarly literature sheds light on the possible causes for maritime raids, it remains less clear on how raiding relates with the broader social and political life. One might ask: how did maritime raiding shape or had been shaped by contemporaneous notions of social organization? More concretely: if maritime raiding was traditionally constitutive of polity formation and expansion, then how did it relate with familial and religious affiliations – widely conceived as important aspects of early modern Southeast Asian polities?

Some studies of pre-modern insular Southeast Asia have highlighted such “soft”, “cultural” affiliations that complement or even supersede “hard” military power. Leonard Andaya’s work of the early modern Moluccan kingdoms serves as an example of how warfare in general plays a secondary role to “cultural myths” in an otherwise violent process of state building. He argues that the shared myth of origins among the various Moluccan kingdoms provided the “basis for common action without political coercion in vast areas encompassing many different cultures and peoples”.⁵ William Cummings’ view of Gowa’s early modern expansion in south Sulawesi likewise privileges socio-cultural over explicitly economic or military factors. To him “Gowa’s imperial expansion was fundamentally a matter of establishing, cementing and perpetuating social relationships”, especially through inter-elite marriage alliances.⁶

But while these studies tend to focus, if not isolate, the social from the strictly military, this chapter explores the link between actual raiding

Globalization, Maritime Raiding and the Birth of Ethnicity (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2002).

4. See David Henley, “Review of the Sulu Zone; The world capitalist economy and the historical imagination (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1998) by James Warren”, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 156.4 (2000); Heather Sutherland, “Review Article: The Sulu Zone Revisited”, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 35.1 (2004).
5. Leonard Andaya, “Cultural State Formation in Eastern Indonesia”, in Anthony Reid (ed.), *Southeast Asia in the Early Modern Era: Trade, Power and Belief* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993): 23. This argument is elaborated in idem, *The World of Maluku: Eastern Indonesia in the Early Modern Period* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1993): Chapters 2 and 3.
6. William Cummings, “Re-evaluating State, Society and the Dynamics of Expansion in Precolonial Gowa”, in Geoff Wade (ed.), *Asian Expansions: The Historical Experiences of Polity Expansion in Asia* (London: Routledge, 2015): 215.

and the notions of the “social.” It examines how the endemic practice of sea-based raiding might have been conceived and instrumentalized by social actors in the context of intensified and perhaps unprecedented economic and ideological flows in the region. It focuses on the Maguindanaos and their activities in the Dutch-claimed territories around 1760–1780 when records of their forays become more conspicuous in the archival sources. It argues that alongside the increased capacity for raiding was the parallel existence, perhaps even intensification, of trans-local identities that likely facilitated and consequently shaped the contours of raiding.

Two underexplored elements appear preponderant: Islam and kinship. While the sources (mostly Dutch) are not particularly keen in describing – much less explaining – how these two social formations played a role in raiding,⁷ they nevertheless provide useful information to extrapolate their dynamics. But before proceeding to these points, a brief contextualization is in order.

Maguindanao has been Sulu’s traditional rival and occasional ally in the region. Notwithstanding its being surpassed by Sulu as the leading polity,⁸ it was able to participate in large-scale expeditions to North Sulawesi and Maluku between c. 1760 and 1780. Maguindanao’s intensified incursions into areas dominated by the Dutch appear closely connected with the presence of the British in Maguindanao and the surrounding region. British traders have been intermittently present since the arrival of several East Indiamen in Sulu in 1761 under the escort of the famed mariner Alexander Dalrymple.⁹ In 1762 Dalrymple succeeded in negotiating the cession of the island of Balambangan off the coast of north Borneo to serve as a British outpost for acquiring goods destined for the China trade. Maguindanao benefitted from the British presence in Balambangan and Sulu where indigenous traders exchanged

7. Most of the sources for this essay are culled from the archives of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) in the National Archives of the Netherlands (The Hague) and Indonesia (Jakarta), henceforth NA and ANRI, respectively.
8. Laarhoven places the decline in 1773 “when the British tried to intercept the Chinese junk trade with the southern Philippines through a competing port at Balambangan, and the subsequent rise of the Sulu state as regional emporium.” Ruurdje Laarhoven, *The Triumph of Moro Diplomacy: The Maguindanao Sultanate in the 17th Century* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1989): 181.
9. Howard T. Fry, *Alexander Dalrymple (1737–1808) and the Expansion of British Trade* (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1970): 140.

forest and marine produce for opium, textiles and especially arms. As James Warren observes,

There is an apparent correlation between intensified Maguindanao/Iranun raiding in the Philippine archipelago and the munitions traffic that was conducted at Jolo by the factors of the East India Company and private country traders from Bengal.¹⁰

Islamizing Resistance

Scholars are divided with regard to Islam's probable role in the raids originating from the southern Philippines. While some negate the "plainly religious motivation" to raids,¹¹ others have associated such religious motivation with Sulu than Maguindanao where Islam was supposedly a more "prominent factor."¹² This section re-examines Maguindanao's Islamic ties and explores how it figured, if at all, in its political and military interaction with the larger Malay-Indonesian Archipelago (Figure 3.1).

In a letter to King George III in 1775 the Sultan of Maguindanao sought to attract British geopolitical and mercantile interests through a list of concessions. Among these is the cession of Bongo island located strategically near the delta of the Maguindanao Basin as well as the supposedly "not yet properly discovered and known" Talaud Archipelago and Yap Island (part of the Carolines).¹³ The sultan favored the British because "whereas the Spaniards intermeddled with the island's religion, and the Dutch usurped dominion and sovereignty, the English confined their attention to trade."¹⁴ The explicit defense of religious autonomy alongside the openness to foreign trade is not confined with Maguindanao. A similar insistence on religious autonomy was previously made during British commercial negotiations in Sulu with its

10. James Francis Warren, "Balambangan and the Rise of the Sulu Sultanate, 1772-1775," *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 50.1 (1977): 81.

11. Domingo M. Non, "Moro Piracy during the Spanish Period and Its Impact," *Southeast Asian Studies (Kyoto)* 30.4 (1993): 404.

12. Heather Sutherland, "Review Article: The Sulu Zone Revisited," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 35.1 (2004): 150.

13. References to this letter are found in Samuel Charles Hill, *Catalogue of the Home Miscellaneous Series of the India Office Records* (London: India Office, 1927): 70, 75, 83.

14. As interpreted in Fry, *Alexander Dalrymple (1737-1808)*: 138-139.



Figure 3.1: Map of the Celebes Sea and surrounding islands (map by author)

chiefs asserting that “no alteration shall be attempted in the established Religion” (i.e. Islam).¹⁵ Indeed if one is to concur with Cesar Majul, Islam lies at the causative core of Maguindanao and Sulu raiding in the Spanish-occupied northern islands,

In this struggle [against the Spaniards], Islam became transformed into an ideological force which rationalized resistance while at the same time infusing patriotism with a religious sentiment...What Spaniards missed in their reflections on the so-called “Moro Wars” was that Islam provided the elements which formed a sort of identity and nationalism among the Muslims.¹⁶

If Majul is entirely or even partially correct, to what extent were Maguindanao’s relations with other groups and regions likewise inflected by religion?

In north Sulawesi – Maguindanao’s immediate neighbor to the south – Islam as a manifest tool of political antagonism seems to have surfaced only in 1875. Under the banner of *perang sabil* (holy war)

15. H. de la Costa, “Muhammad Alimuddin I, Sultan of Sulu, 1735–1773”, *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 38.1 (1965): 65.

16. Cesar Adib Majul, *Muslims in the Philippines* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1973): 102.

against the Dutch and inspired by the raging war in Aceh, the *peranakan* Arab named Syarif Mansur from Buol led around fifty (likely Sufi *tarekat*) followers in a suicidal attack on the colonial fort in Manado.¹⁷ Less explicitly political but nonetheless significant were the conversion of north Sulawesi's ruling elite from Dutch-prescribed Protestantism to Islam as Dutch power declined in the late eighteenth century and during the brief and religiously-neutral British regime in north Sulawesi in the early nineteenth century.¹⁸ These elite conversions and the 1870s discourse on a "holy war" appear completely unrelated with the affairs of Maguindanao. Yet one could argue that long before the rise of political Islam in north Sulawesi and indeed before most of its inhabitants became Muslim, Maguindanao had already offered an alternative religious and political path for north Sulawesi elites.

The Dutch East India Company archives reveal that in 1769 Company functionaries discovered that two aristocratic children from north Sulawesi were studying Islam in Maguindanao. Marapati, a vassal (*leenman*) of the Company and chief of Tombelo, was obliged to admit that one of those children was his own. Likely fearing retribution, he had to re-assure the Company that he was a Christian and that he had to declare if not feign that the children were brought to Maguindanao without his knowledge by a brother-in-law who hails from Sulu.¹⁹ But it was likely that Marapati consented to the sending, aware perhaps that an able religious teacher lived in Maguindanao. A good contemporaneous candidate would be the Shafiite scholar named Abdul Majid Mindanawi who wrote an introductory theological treatise while in Aceh,²⁰ perhaps on the way back to his Mindanao homeland.

17. This event is memorialized in popular lyric poetry (*pantun*), *Boek panton deri waktu Bwool masok di Menado pada tahoen 1876* (Menado: Menadosche Drukkerij, 1900). It is somewhat reminiscent of the well-studied Banten revolt of 1888. Sartono Kartodirdjo, *The Peasants' Revolt of Banten in 1888; Its Conditions, Course and Sequel* ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966).

18. ANRI, Manado 48, no. 4, Verslag van de Rijkjes en Negorijen ten Westen van Manado Gelegen, D. F. W. Pietermaat, Resident van Manado, 31 December 1833, fol. 13.

19. NA, VOC, 8137, Letter of the Governor of Ternate Hermannus Munink to Governor-General Albertus van der Parra, May 1770, fols. 35–36.

20. See Midori Kawashima & Oman Fathurahman, "Islamic Manuscripts of Southern Philippines: A Research Note with Descriptions of Three Manuscripts", *The Journal of Sophia Asian Studies* 29 (2011): 254.

The second-half of the eighteenth century saw increasing connections between the southern Philippines and the broader Islamic world. Annabel Gallop suggests that a number of extant Qur'ans from the region were likely made or at least inspired by scholars and scribes from the Daghistan region of northern Caucasus.²¹ She reminds of the already conspicuous presence of foreign Muslims serving as high-ranking religious officials (*qadi*) in the courts of Sulu and Maguindanao. Sulu had seen an Arab, Turk and Afghan *qadi* while in the nineteenth century Maguindanao had a Bukharan (Uzbek) chief *pandita* (religious adviser).²²

Patchy evidence likewise points to the religious connection of southern Philippines with Java. Banten in particular, seems to have been an important node for these religious circulations. This is suggested by the presence of a manuscript on Islamic mysticism (*tasawwuf*) written by a Mindanao scholar (*alim*) named Syekh Ihsan al-Din that identifies the well-known mystic Abdul Qahhar al-Bantani as inspiration.²³ The half-Bugis (Soppéng), half-Tausug future sultan of Sulu, Azim ud-Din I (r. 1735–48; 1764–74)²⁴ was initially educated in Islamic jurisprudence by an intellectual (*fakih*), named Abdul Rahman, who came to Sulu via Batavia and likely had a connection from Banten as well.²⁵ These ties are not unexpected given the corresponding references, albeit fragmen-

21. Annabel Teh Gallop, "From Caucasia to Southeast Asia: Daghistani Qur'ans and the Islamic Manuscript Tradition in Brunei and the Southern Philippines I", *Manuscripta Orientalia* 14.1 (2008): 46; Annabel Teh Gallop, "From Caucasia to Southeast Asia: Daghistani Qur'ans and the Islamic Manuscript Tradition in Brunei and the Southern Philippines II", *Manuscripta Orientalia* 14.2 (2008).

22. Gallop, "From Caucasia to Southeast Asia: Daghistani Qur'ans and the Islamic Manuscript Tradition in Brunei and the Southern Philippines I", *Manuscripta Orientalia* 14.1 (2008): 46.

23. See Oman Fathurahman, *Shaṭṭāriyah silsilah in Aceh, Java and the Lanao area of Mindanao* (Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa (ILCAA), Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (TUFS), 2016); Oman Fathurahman, "Aceh, Banten, dan Mindanao", *Republika (Indonesia)* (9 March 2012) [Online]. Abdul Qahhar al-Bantani enjoyed patronage from the Bantenese sultan Abun Nazr Zainul Asikin (1753–1777). Atsushi Ota, "Imagined Link, Domesticated Religion: The State and the Outside Islamic Network in Banten, West Java, c. 1520-1813", in Nagazumi Yoko (ed.), *Large and Broad: The Dutch Impact on Early Modern Asia (Essays in Honor of Leonard Blussé)* (Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko, 2010): 15–16.

24. Majul, *Muslims in the Philippines*: 21.

25. NA, VOC 8087, Letter of the Sultan of Sulu to Governor-General Mattheus de Haan in Batavia, received 2 July 1727, fol. 9.

tary, on the commercial relations between Banten and the peoples of Maguindanao and Sulu. Banten alongside Makassar, Banjarmasin and Jepara were some of the preferred destinations of Maguindanao traders.²⁶ The Bantenese noble Syarif Hassan was known to have visited Sulu in the late eighteenth century to collect a debt on behalf of his uncle, the “chief of the Moors” in Batavia.²⁷

The anxiety caused to the Company by the sending of a vassal's child to Maguindanao and the consequent reassurance of being Christian by the vassal (Marapati) himself appear in the first instance not a question of religion but of *realpolitik*. In the same year of the discovery of the incident with Tombelo's children, the Maguindanaos were rumored to be planning the invasion of the Company-ruled Sangir and install a captive Sangirese prince (Hendrik Paparang) as their own vassal on Siau Island.²⁸ In the previous years, the Maguindanaos had launched daring expeditions in the Company's northernmost territories (the Sangir archipelago) underpinned by an increasing commercial traffic with China and possibly propelled by the British presence in nearby Sulu.²⁹

But one could also argue that the Company's own *realpolitik* had assumed a parallel and perhaps even counteractive religious tone. Although the Company was certainly more tolerant of religious differences than their Spanish neighbors to the north, it nevertheless strived to embed religion in its dealings with native societies especially if it would contribute to a better political and economic position.³⁰ Conversion to Protestant Christianity had been a precondition to rule for most of

26. NA, VOC 8075, Journal of Jacob Cloek and Nicolas Ploos van Amstel in their commission to Maguindanao, 30 September 1705, fol. 284.

27. NA, VOC 8141, Ternate 4, Rapport bij wijze van dagverhaal opgesteld ende overgegeven aan den wel edele gestrenger heer Mr. Jacob Roeland Thomaszen gouverneur en directeur benevens den raad der Moluccos behelsende het voorgevallene op de door de ondergeteekende commissianten [A. J. den Hartogh, G. F. Durr en P. de Koning] gedane expeditie en commissie langs Celebes Noordwestkust tot Dondo gedateerd 14 Januarij 1780 (ontvangen anno 1780), fo. 121.

28. NA, VOC 3277, Secret Missive from the Governor of Ternate to Batavia, 25 July 1769, fol. 8.

29. Fry, *Alexander Dalrymple (1737-1808)*: 136-147.

30. The Dutch missions in early modern eastern Indonesia were apparently and interestingly an inspiration for the English missions in the Atlantic, especially with respect to the use of native missionaries. Edward E. Andrews, *Native Apostles: Black and Indian Missionaries in the British Atlantic World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013): 19.

the chiefs (*raja*) of north Sulawesi's small polities (*rijkjes*). For the local raja, it affirmed not only his legitimacy but also secured the continued existence of his polity as an entity of its own.³¹ It likewise assured the ruling elite's status difference from and dominance over their subjects as well as their horizontal equivalence with neighboring ruling families. Conversion to the religion of the Company might even provide the impetus for the creation of a new polity as in the case of Bintauna in north Sulawesi. In 1766, it was recognized by the Company as a separate polity after its chief and his people converted and had escaped from the supposed oppressive rule of their former overlord, Gorontalo's Muslim queen.³² The sending of the Tombelo children to Maguindanao could therefore ominously signal a repudiation of the political privileges and obligations attached with being a Christian vassal of the Company.

Religion as a political marker seems to have intensified through the course of the eighteenth century. In 1759 the Company had set a prohibition on the sale of Christian slaves. By 1770 a more encompassing regulation was introduced which among other things prescribed that no Christian masters could buy or alienate Christian slaves.³³ An event in 1769 could illustrate this privileging according to religious affiliation. In that year the Company functionaries redeemed Filipinos (with apparently Spanish-derived names as "Kulas", "Isko" and "Pedro") from their Sulu captors who brought them to Ternate. Aware of the 1762 bill (*plakkaat*) that no Spanish subjects should be purchased as slaves

31. ANRI Manado inv. 65, no. 1, Contract between Marcus Manoppo and the VOC, 30 October 1773, 'Fatsal yang kadalapan: Salagi oleh Panghoeloe tiada akan boleh mengambel istrinya atauw dikawinkan kaffir, melainkan dengan orang sabagitoe jang ada masaranij Christahon jang ada sasoengoe dan benar.' The original Dutch translation is as follows: 'Wijders en zal de Regent niet vermogen een onchristen tot zijn gemalinne te nemen of trouwen, maar alleen zodanig ene die van de Christelijke gereformeerde religie zij'. The chief is prohibited to marry a non-Christian woman, but only allowed to marry someone belonging to the Dutch Reformed church.

32. See KITLV Archives (Leiden), KITLV H 91, Bundel contracten van de Residentie Menado, no. 3: Korte Aantekeningen op de bestaande Kontracten in de Residentie Menado; F.W. Stapel, *Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlandico-Indicum*, vol. 6 1753–1799 ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1955): 592–95.

33. Carla van Wamelen, *Family life onder de VOC: Een handelscompagnie in huwelijks- en gezinszaken* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2014): 126–27.

by the Company, the functionaries invoked “Christian compassion”.³⁴ They added that the freed Filipinos would anyhow be demanded to cultivate Company-owned sago fields to enable the Filipinos to pay their ransom cost.³⁵ Some of these Filipino slaves also “fetch a much higher price than any others” because of their basic literacy that made them “useful in keeping their master’s accounts” as one nineteenth-century British visitor in Sulu observes.³⁶ An ostensibly religious reason was also put forward by the Spaniards who had sought and were successful in eradicating slavery as an institution in the Catholic Philippines by the late eighteenth century.³⁷ They were reportedly ready to “ransom every slave they succeeded in converting to Christianity” in Sulu.³⁸

The increasing importance of religion in viewing an endemic practice of slavery also reached the Islamic areas of the region. Scholars have observed that “Islam, even more explicitly than Christianity, forbade the enslavement of coreligionists.”³⁹ As such this religious prohibition “must have been a powerful incentive” for enslaved captives to convert.⁴⁰ Yet in Sulu for instance, such “[Islamic] evangelical work among the slaves or captives [...] is not known.”⁴¹ Nonetheless there are scattered references to slaves acquiring freedom by becoming Muslim. In 1760s Maguindanao, a captive Filipino from Pampanga was freed after converting to Islam.⁴² In the Company-dominated outpost in Ternate, a Makassarese named Abdul Malik appealed that a hereditary slave-

34. NA, VOC 8137, Letter of the Governor and Council to the Governor-General in Batavia, September 1769, fols. 2–3.

35. NA, VOC 8137, Meeting of the Political Council, 6 July 1769, fols. 81–82.

36. Spenser St. John, *Life in the Forests of the Far East* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1862): 2.215.

37. Michel Salman, *The Embarrassment of Slavery: Controversies over Bondage and Nationalism in the American Colonial Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001): 31.

38. Majul, *Muslims in the Philippines*, 208.

39. Anthony Reid, “The Decline of Slavery in Nineteenth-Century Indonesia”, in Martin A. Klein (ed.), *Breaking the Chains: Slavery, Bondage, and Emancipation in Modern Africa and Asia* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1993): 70.

40. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*: 357.

41. Majul, *Muslims in the Philippines*: 213.

42. Thomas Forrest, *A Voyage to New Guinea, and the Moluccas from Balambangan, Including an Account of Magindano, Sooloo, and Other Islands* (Dublin: W. Price and H. Whitestone etc., 1799): 216.

woman whom he married should be freed along with her children. He argued before the Dutch Political Council (*Raad van Politie*) that his wife and her children “had to be freed by virtue of the marriage and of the Islamic laws.” The Sultan of Ternate concurred but was countered by the Company who opposed implementing an Islamic proscription.⁴³

From these examples one could glean information of how an ancient (pre-Islamic and pre-Christian) practice of slavery,⁴⁴ albeit now intensified and more widespread, became viewed on religious terms. Both Islam and Christianity proffered theological pathways to slave liberation.⁴⁵ But the question as to which individuals such liberation would be granted was not only a religious but also and more important, a political issue.⁴⁶ That slavery became refracted through the religious lens seems to follow a broader trend in which essentially non-religious social phenomena came to be understood in simplified, often in binary opposition with another religion. Such religious dichotomy seems to have been particularly convenient in expressing political antagonism and economic competition.

Throughout the archipelago, resistance and expansion was long expressed through Islam. Anthony Reid has noted that in seventeenth-century Sumatra and Java, Islam “helped to invalidate non-Muslim rivals ... [and] provided an honorable motive for conquest.”⁴⁷ During the expansion of Dutch influence in Maluku and Sulawesi in the 1680s, Islamic teachers from Banten were recorded as having been brought to Maluku

43. NA, VOC 3759, Meeting of the Political Council, 25 September 1786, fols. 22–24.

44. See Junker, *Raiding, Trading and Feasting*.

45. Despite their reputation, as Kiefer notes, the Tausug “had always been ambivalent about slavery for religious and theological reasons.” Thomas Kiefer, “An Anthropological Perspective on the Nineteenth Century Sulu Sultanate”, in John A. Larkin (ed.), *Perspectives of Philippine Historiography: A Symposium* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1979): 60. See also Thomas M. Kiefer, *The Tausug: Violence and Law in a Philippine Moslem Society* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972): 84; William Gervase Clarence-Smith, *Islam and the Abolition of Slavery* (London: Hurst and Company, 2006): 35.

46. Reid, “The Decline of Slavery in Nineteenth-Century Indonesia”, 70.

47. Anthony Reid, “Kings, Kadis and Charisma in the 17th-Century Archipelago”, in Anthony Reid (ed.), *The Making of an Islamic Political Discourse in Southeast Asia* (Clayton, Victoria: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, 1993): 90.

to “foment revolt against the Dutch.”⁴⁸ Meanwhile, the Muslim peoples of Weda (Halmahera) were known to have invoked Islam to resist their Dutch overlords. Their planned participation in a *hong*i (spice eradication campaign), as Leonard Andaya points out, had to be postponed “since that particular day was the Islamic Sabbath”. They likewise denied possessing highly prized tortoiseshell which the Company would like to acquire, because Islam “forbade the catching tortoises” or so they claimed.⁴⁹ Closer to Maguindanao, the Muslim inhabitants of Kendahe in Sangir were known to have resisted the influence of local Christianized *rajas* “favored” by the Company.⁵⁰ In Banten, where both Maguindanao and Sulu had religious links, the notion of a “holy war” against the Company had been particularly rife. One of the popular leaders of the Banten Rebellion (1750–1752) against the “infidel” Dutch named Kyai Tapa “raised an Islamic legal principle that Muslims should not be subjected to a non-Muslim ruler.”⁵¹ Azyumardi Azra opines that while the “European challenge” should not be exaggerated, “there is little doubt that it contributed to the growing concern among [...] Malay-Indonesian scholars about the future of Islam.”⁵² In the eighteenth century, the scholar Abd al-Samad al-Palimbani had not only been “most responsible for the further spread of neo-Sufism in the archipelago” but also was an “exemplary activist against Dutch colonialism [and] encouraged [...] *jih*ad against the Dutch.”⁵³

In Maguindanao, James Warren has passingly remarked that the raiders before 1768 considered their activity in the Philippines as “an

48. Andaya, *The World of Maluku*, 182.

49. Ibid., 100; Muridan Satrio Widjojo, “Cross-Cultural Alliance-Making and Local Resistance in Maluku during the Revolt of Prince Nuku, c. 1780–1810” (PhD Dissertation, Leiden University, 2007): 109.

50. NA, VOC 8141, Ternate 3, Copia dagregister gehouden door den onderkoopman Hemmekam gedurende zijne commissie naar de Sangirsche eilanden (ontvangen anno 1780), fol. 89.

51. Atsushi Ota, “Orthodoxy and Reconciliation: Islamic Strategies in the Kingdom of Banten, c. 1520–1813”, in idem, Ahmad Suaedy, & Okamoto Masaaki (eds), *Islam in Contention: Rethinking Islam and State in Indonesia* (Jakarta: Wahid Institute 2010): 410–11.

52. Azyumardi Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia: Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern ‘Ulama’ in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2004): 127.

53. Ibid., 130–133.

extension of *jihad*”.⁵⁴ Their large-scale raiding attacks of north Sulawesi and Maluku in the 1770s at the time when the British were intermittently present provide hints to an emerging anti-Dutch front where Islam might have likewise played a role. These raids were organized by Haji Umar alongside the *raja muda* (heir apparent) and later sultan of Maguindanao, Kibad Syahrial, a certain Sayyid Abdullah and *nakhoda* Uduṅ.⁵⁵ Their fleet of thirty vessels attacked settlements in north Sulawesi and Halmahera that were friendly to the Company.⁵⁶ Haji Umar himself intended to invade not only the Company posts at Manado, Kema, Amurang and Ternate, but also the forts of Makassar and even Batavia⁵⁷ – an ambitious plan somehow leaked to the Company.⁵⁸ Although the later exploits of the Maguindanaos still paled from what Haji Umar had desired, the Company retrospectively considered his 1777 expedition as the beginning of the incessant war against “piracy”.⁵⁹

Haji Umar, the Ternate-born⁶⁰ trader, royal emissary and “pirate leader”⁶¹ represents the *zeitgeist* of the late eighteenth century. Although

54. Quoted in Sutherland, “Review Article: The Sulu Zone Revisited,” 150.

55. It is tempting to conclude that *nakhoda* (ship captain) Uduṅ was the same person (La Uduṅ) that was identified as one of the messengers of the Sultan of Boné in 1775, especially because Makassar was envisioned by Haji Umar and his allies as one of their ultimate targets. Connections with the local Bugis notables – through Uduṅ – were therefore necessary if it was to be realized. Rahilah Omar, “The History of Boné A.D. 1775-1795: The Diary of Sultan Ahmad as-Salleh Syamsuddin” (Hull: University of Hull, 2003): 56. In any case, *nakhoda* Uduṅ who participated in the 1777 attacks also served as the envoy of Maguindanao to the Sangirese. NA, VOC 8141, Ternate 3, Copia dagregister gehouden door den onderkoopman Hemmekam gedurende zijne commissie naar de Sangirsche eilanden (ontvangen anno 1780), fol. 58.

56. A fleet of thirty vessels would have consisted of at least one thousand men. In the retaliatory expeditions of the Company the following year, that consisted of twenty vessels, there was a total of one thousand men (mainly rowers). ANRI Ternate inv. 14, Meeting of the Political Council of Ternate, 3 April 1778, 385.

57. ANRI Ternate inv. 14, Meeting of the Political Council of Ternate, 6 August 1778, 162; ANRI Ternate inv. 14, Meeting of the Political Council of Ternate, 21 May 1778, fol. 412.

58. Warren, *The Sulu Zone, 1768–1898*, 162.

59. NA, VOC 7440, Extracts of the Letters from the Indies (Ambon-Timor I), no. 5.

60. NA, VOC 8141, Ternate 3, Copia dagregister gehouden door den onderkoopman Hemmekam gedurende zijne commissie naar de Sangirsche eilanden (ontvangen anno 1780), fol. 88.

61. Andaya, *The World of Maluku*, 231.

likely from a commoner background – he was born in Ternate’s *kampung Makassar* (Makassar quarter) – he eventually gained affinal ties with the royal houses of Tidore,⁶² Bacan⁶³ and Maguindanao.⁶⁴ He served as the navigator for the English country trader Thomas Forrest when he surreptitiously visited Maluku between 1774 and 1776.⁶⁵ In effect, Haji Umar assisted the English in collecting information on the economic and political situation of Maluku and Papua in view of the British interest to partake of the spice trade and of the various marine and forest produce of the islands.⁶⁶

Haji Umar likely served as the channel between the Maguindanao court and Prince Nuku of Tidore who led a protracted armed struggle against Dutch rule in the Moluccas (c. 1780–1805).⁶⁷ Haji Umar’s ally and important patron,⁶⁸ sultan Kibad Syahrial of Maguindanao, was known to have gifted Prince Nuku an Islamic seal that is unique in the region. Annabel Gallop describes it as a “very unusual shape of a circle topped by a headpiece of three trefoil finials” and that such “presentation of a seal represented the bestowal of recognition by a great power to a lesser one”.⁶⁹

62. ANRI Ternate 1, Decisions of the Political Council of Ternate, 13 September 1777, 400–401.

63. ANRI Ternate 81, no. 4, Authentique Afschriften van de Crimineele Proces Papieren contra Hadjie Oemar, unpaginated.

64. NA, VOC 8141, Ternate 3, Copia dagregister gehouden door den onderkoopman Hemmekam gedurende zijne commissie naar de Sangirsche eilanden (ontvangen anno 1780), fol. 88

65. D. K. Bassett, *British Trade and Policy in Indonesia and Malaysia in the Late Eighteenth Century*, Hull Monographs on Southeast Asia No. 3 (Hull: Centre for South-east Asian Studies, The University of Hull, 1971): 36. See Forrest, *A Voyage to New Guinea, and the Moluccas from Balambangan*.

66. Muridan Widjojo, *The Revolt of Prince Nuku: Cross-cultural Alliance-making in Maluku, c. 1780–1810* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009): 165–66.

67. See *ibid.*; Andaya, *The World of Maluku*.

68. On the relationship between Haji Umar and Kibad Syahrial, see NA, VOC, 8141, Ternate 3, Copia dagregister gehouden door den onderkoopman Hemmekam gedurende zijne commissie naar de Sangirsche eilanden (ontvangen anno 1780), fol. 88.

69. Annabel Teh Gallop, “Islamic Seals from the Philippines”, in Isaac Donoso (ed.), *More Islamic than We Admit: Insights into Philippine Cultural History* (Quezon City: Vibal, 2014): 244–45.

Haji Umar's embeddedness within the emerging regional order could be gleaned from his role in the "return" – likely ransom – of two European soldiers from Riau. In 1787, the Iranuns of northern Borneo, previously subjects of the sultan of Maguindanao, participated in the siege of Tanjung Pinang in Riau to remove the occupying Dutch forces.⁷⁰ The Iranuns had been summoned by some Malay chiefs who had been dissatisfied of the commercial and political restrictions imposed on them by the Dutch.⁷¹ The invasion resulted in the Company defeat and retreat to Malacca as well as the capture of approximately fifty soldiers and twenty cannon. Haji Umar's ransom of some soldiers in the Ternate outpost preceded any Company news from Batavia regarding the invasion,⁷² pointing perhaps to the existence of an effective Islamic maritime network that linked both ends of the archipelago.

In the middle of this emerging maritime network were the Arab merchants and sojourners from the Hadhramaut whose numbers and influence increased "as Dutch power declined in the course of the eighteenth century."⁷³ The details of the interaction between the Arabs and the Maguindanaos, in particular and the congeries of "piratical" groups, in general remain unknown. But in north Sulawesi, some of these Arab-descended merchants (*syarifs* and *sayyids*) had been active proselytizers among indigenous entrepreneurs and sojourners otherwise referred to in the colonial sources as "rovers."⁷⁴ Muslim chiefs even "allegedly

70. Its adjacent island, Penyengat, notably became a center of Malay (Islamic) culture in the region in the course of the nineteenth century, the roots of which likely go back to the previous century. Keng We Koh, "Travel and Survival in the Colonial Malay World: Mobility, Region and the World in Johor Elite Strategies, 1818–1914", *Journal of World History* 25.4 (2014): 571.

71. Episodes of this event are described in Raja Ali Haji, *The Precious Gift = (Tuhfat al-Nafis)*, edited by Virginia Matheson Hooker and B. W. Andaya, *Tuhfat al-Nafis* (Kuala Lumpur, etc. : Oxford University Press, 1982). See also Carl Anthony Trocki, *Prince of Pirates: the Temenggongs and Development of Johor and Singapore 1784–1885* (Singapore : Singapore University Press, 1979): 28.

72. NA, VOC 3817, Secret Decisions of the Political Council (Ternate), 10 October 1787 – 6 August 1788, fols. 58–59.

73. William G. Clarence-Smith, "The Rise and Fall of Hadhrami Shipping in the Indian Ocean, c. 1750- c. 1940", in David Parkin and Ruth Barnes (eds), *Ships and the Development of Maritime Technology in the Indian Ocean* (Routledge Curzon, 2002): 230.

74. NA, Ministry of Colonies, 6078, 26 April 1876, L10 no. 38 [Kabinetverbaal], Letter of Wolterbeek Muller, Commandant of the steamship ZM Banca to the

accorded Hadhrami *sayyids* shippers a remission of duties, on account of their ‘superior sanctity’”.⁷⁵ But whatever the case might have been it is clear that both the Arabs and indigenous traders took advantage of the economic opportunities arising from Dutch decline. Previously nonexistent alliances not only between Arabs and indigenous rulers, but also between native rulers themselves, came to be forged. In Kwandang (north Sulawesi), where the Company had a fort, a functionary suspiciously observed that the subjects of the Toli-toli *raja* who lived there “were never raided by the Maguindanao even if they ventured into fishing.”⁷⁶ He attributed this phenomenon to the connections of Maguindanao and Sulu with the *raja* of Toli-toli.

It seems that Islam’s prominence in the late eighteenth century was more than incidental. A more conspicuous Islamic network emerged in which Maguindanao became ensconced. Meanwhile, resistance to Company authority – from the Straits of Malacca to Maluku – was overwhelmingly led by Muslim figures who – if not explicitly then at least hinting – viewed political and economic competition through the lens of religion. On a more positive note, Islam likely provided the common ground for the geographically dispersed, culturally diverse and essentially unrelated individuals and polities to interact. But even so, the Maguindanao chiefs’ political and military ambitions did not always necessarily assume a religious undertone.

Familializing Ties

If Islam seems to have shaped Maguindanao’s long-distance contacts, then kinship has played an important part in its relations with adjacent regions. Although the existing historical literature on Maguindanao points to kinship as one of the keys in understanding its state-formation, it fails to investigate the relationship between kinship and raiding – an activity that was central to the emerging state. This section investigates how the notion of kinship may have complemented, even superseded Maguindanao’s raiding activities in its neighboring Sangir archipelago.

Vice-Admiral of the Navy, Netherlands Indies, Menado, 5 October 1875.

75. Clarence-Smith, “The Rise and Fall of Hadhrami Shipping in the Indian Ocean, c. 1750 – c. 1940”, 232.

76. ANRI, Ternate inv. 55, Copy of the Secret Letter of J. Schoe to the onderkoopman and Resident of Menado, Willem Fredrik Mersz., Kaidipan, 3 October 1784.

Scholars have pointed out that Maguindanao's intricate web of elite familial relations is a key to understanding its political dynamics.⁷⁷ These relations, as recorded and reified in the royal *tarsila* (genealogical records), show not only the vertical continuity of rulers but also and more important, the horizontal relationship between various elite families that constituted the polity.⁷⁸ These interlocking familial ties underpinning its elite "pluralism or oligarchy" are indeed Maguindanao's "greatest strength."⁷⁹ Thus it is perhaps no surprise that family relations also served as a modality for political expansion. Maguindanao's attempts to expand by appointing its favored, likely blood-related chiefs among the Maranao is known,⁸⁰ but it remains unknown whether such modality also applied to its interaction with overseas neighbors in the period of intensified sea-raiding.

A good launching point to understand Maguindanao's relations with its weaker overseas neighbors (thus likely raiding targets) is the story of the murder of Salawo sometime in 1760. In various historical moments this story surfaced as the cause for the Maguindanao raids in Sangir. In the memory of both the Sangirese and the Maguindanao, Salawo's murder marked the beginning of the decades-long Maguindanao depredations.

According to a Sangirese *raja* interrogated by Company officials in Ternate in 1780,⁸¹ the enmity between Maguindanao and Sangir was rooted in the murder of Salawo, chief of the settlement (*negeri*) of Malurang (present-day Sarangani, the Philippines). Salawo, an ally of the Maguindanaos, was murdered by the Siau prince named Luli (also known in the archival sources as Elias Jacobs) who in turn was allied

77. Isaac Donoso, "Philippine Islamic Manuscripts and Western Historiography", 3; Majul, *Muslims in the Philippines*: 1–12.

78. See Elsa Clavé, "La malayisation du Sud philippin (XVe–XIXe siècles); recherches historiques appuyées sur l'analyse des sources narratives et juridiques des sultanats de Sulu (c. 1450–c. 1900) et de Mindanao (c. 1520–c. 1900)" (Paris: l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient, 2013): 161.

79. Anthony Reid, "Religion in Early Modern Southeast Asia: Synthesising Global and Local", in Judith Schlehe and Evamaria Sandkuhler (eds), *Religion, Tradition and the Popular: Transcultural Views from Asia and Europe* (Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2014): 57.

80. Ghislaine Loyré-de-Hautecloque, *A la recherche de l'Islam philippin: la communauté maranao* (Paris: Éditions L'Harmattan, 1989): 127.

81. NA, VOC 8143, Meeting of the Political Council, 9 October 1780, fo. 4–11.

with the Company. Informed of the murder, Salawo's brother sailed to Siau and demanded its *raja* to surrender the culprit for retribution. But the *raja* refused. The party from Malurang went home only to return with a raiding fleet of their Maguindanao overlords. They succeeded in destroying Siau's main settlement, signaling the beginning of Maguindanao's incessant raids of the islands.

The story of Salawo is similarly recalled and invoked by the Maguindanao raiders themselves. In 1789, when the Company was drafting a peace treaty with sultan Kibad Syahrial of Maguindanao, the latter refused to ratify by invoking among others the unjust murder of Salawo.⁸² The sultan also recalled the damage inflicted by a combined Sangirese and Dutch expedition of 1770 to Salawo's settlement and Maguindanao's vassal polity of Sarangani (Batulaki).⁸³ In this expedition, interpreted as a retaliation of Maguindanao's previous destruction of Siau immediately after Salawo's murder, approximately three hundred houses and one hundred vessels were burned and surrounding agricultural fields destroyed.⁸⁴

The story of Salawo resurfaces in the records in 1825 – sixty-five years after the actual murder – when the Dutch functionary A. J. van Delden visited Sangir to reassert colonial authority.⁸⁵ The Sangirese informants affirmed that the murder of Salawo was the root of enmity between Sangir and Maguindanao. They likewise echoed the standard sequence of the events. After Salawo's murder in the island of Maju,⁸⁶ Salawo's partisans requested the assistance of Maguindanao and jointly

82. A draft of this treaty can be found in Stapel, 592–95.

83. A reference to this attack can be found in William Lessa, *Drake's Island of Thieves. Ethnological Sleuthing* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1975): 141–43; *Carteret's Voyage Round the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965): 1.75.

84. NA, VOC 8138, Letter from the Governor of Ternate and Council to the High Government, 12 August 1771, fol. 107.

85. ANRI Manado inv. 46, no. 2, Van Delden, Sangir-Talaud Eilanden, 1826, fols. 76–77 ; A. J. van Delden, "De Sangir-eilanden in 1825", *Indisch Magazijn* 1.7-9 (1844): 24.

86. Maju [Dutch: Mejauw] is an island halfway between the north Sulawesi peninsula and Halmahera. In the nineteenth century, the area gained notoriety as a base for 'pirates' based in Sulu. KITLV Archives (Leiden) H 1345, W. J. M. Michielsens Herinneringen, Dl. 2: In Gouvernements Dienst. Ambtenaar ter beschikking residentie Menado, 177.

attacked Siau, burned its settlements and captured and enslaved many of its people to avenge Salawo's death. In retaliation, the *rajas* of Sangir led by the *raja* of Siau (Ismail Jacobs) in alliance with the Dutch and Ternate, launched an attack by burning Maguindanao and Malurang houses and fields.

Historical records prove that Salawo existed. Documents refer to a *jogugu* (subaltern chief) of Malurang named Siabu – i.e., Salawo⁸⁷ – just prior to his murder.⁸⁸ The sources do not reveal much more, however, except that he appears to have been in the company of a half-Maguindanao, half-Sulu (Tausug) chief named Timbang Sulug.⁸⁹ Perhaps more revealing are the oral histories that reaffirm the historicity of Salawo and provide texture to his life story. Salawo has been immortalized in a traditional Sangirese *sasambo* (lyric poem), a fragment of which reads: “[S]ince the Salawo incident, these islands have continuously experienced war” (*Mengkeng landungi Salawo, Nusa taniedong seke*).⁹⁰ In at least three versions of the story familiar to the Sangirese, Salawo's murder is attributed to his desire to marry the Siau princess named Nanding (a.k.a., Elizabeth Jacobs), first daughter of *raja* Ismail Jacobs.⁹¹ Unfortunately for Salawo, Nanding's family's opposition and his supposed insistence and disrespect eventually led to his murder by Nanding's uncle, Prince Luli.⁹²

What then is the significance of these shared narratives and similar causation? Presuming that the oral versions of the story are reliable, then they point to Salawo's desire to extend marriage relations under the aegis

87. That 'Siabu' and 'Salawo' are the same and therefore refer to the same person, see Nelman Mangamba & Christina Pasaribu (tr.), *Manga Wekeng Asal'u Tau Sangihe = Cerita-cerita Asal Orang Sangir = Stories of the origins of the Sangir people* (Davao, Philippines: The Committee for the Promotion of the Sangir Language, 1995): 103.

88. NA, VOC 8130, Letter from the Governor of Ternate to Batavia, 31 May 1760, fol. 45.

89. Ibid.

90. H. B. Elias, *Sejarah Pergerakan Kebangsaan Indonesia di Pulau Siau* (Manado: Markas cabang Legiun Veteran R. I. Kotamadya Manado, 1973): 53.

91. Ibid.: 92–93.

92. The dating of the story to 1590 is incorrect. Ibid., 74; Gidion Maru, *Kumpulan Cerita Rakyat Kabupaten Kepulauan Siau, Tagulandang, dan Biaro asal usul Siau dan kisah-kisah lainnya* (Manado: Lembah Manah, 2012), 51–55. The 'Salawo affair' happened around 1760. See NA, VOC 8143, Meeting of the Political Council, 9 October 1780, 4–5.

of Maguindanao but in a region whose rulers profess alliance with the Company. If Salawo had succeeded, it would have facilitated his social and political mobility within and between various polities in the image of his co-sojourner and likely supporter, Timbang Sulug.

Timbang Sulug embodies the quintessential *anak raja* – aristocratic figures who serve as conduits for commercial and political networking.⁹³ Genealogical proximity to various ruling families seems to be an indispensable criterion in becoming or being considered one. Not only could Timbang Sulug claim close enatic relations to Sangir, Iranun and Maguindanao but also agnatically to Sulu.⁹⁴ He traded wax for Indian cloth with a Company functionary while visiting Sangir and appeared well-informed of the political affairs in Maguindanao.⁹⁵

Viewed from a longer historical perspective, Salawo's marriage venture in Sangir was not exceptional. Maguindanao and Sangir share a long history of inter-elite marriages that could be traced back as early as the seventeenth century in both local and European sources.⁹⁶ But the

93. For examples from other regions, see Barbara Andaya, "The Role of the Anak Raja in Malay History: A Case Study from Eighteenth-Century Kedah", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 7.2 (1976) and Wellen, *The Open Door*, chapter five.

94. "Timbang Sulug" or "Timbang Xullok" in Dutch sources is "Raja Baginda Timbang". Najeeb M. Saleeby, *Studies in Moro History, Law and Religion* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1905): 35. The Dutch source mentions that he was named such because of him "being related to both kings" (*zijnde van de parentagie der beide koningen*) [of Sulu and Maguindanao]. NA, VOC 8130, Letter sent to Governor-general Jacob Mossel, 31 May 1760, fol. 45. "Timbang" means "equal" or a mixture of two parts while "Sulug" apparently comes from "Sulu". In Sangirese (and most likely in many languages of the Indonesian Archipelago) "Timbang" connotes the existence and mixture of two (equal) elements. K. G. F. and W. E. Aebersold Steller, *Sangirees-Nederlands woordenboek met Nederlands-Sangirees register* ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959): 497. Turning our attention to the *tarsila* (royal genealogy), we find that his mother Fatima, was a Maguindanaoan noble, while his father, named Gulay, was a Datu from Sulu. Saleeby, *Studies in Moro History, Law and Religion*, 39. Timbang Sulug's mother Fatima was in fact the daughter of the Tabukan (Sangirese) princess Babay Basing and the Maguindanao sultan Barahaman (r. 1678–1699). *Ibid.*: 38. Meanwhile Babay Basing was the granddaughter of an Iranun chief who became a chief in Sangir. Forrest, *A Voyage to New Guinea, and the Moluccas from Balambangan*, 216.

95. NA, VOC 8130, Letter sent to Governor-General Jacob Mossel from Ternate, 31 May 1760, fol. 45.

96. See Saleeby, *Studies in Moro History, Law and Religion*, 38. NA, VOC 4633, Extract uijt d' Instructie door den commissaris Dirk de Haas, op zijn vertrok, aan den Gouverneur in Ternate, Johannes Cops nagelaten in dato, 31 July 1689, fol. 2.

pax neerlandica in Sangir preconditioned the shift of marriage alliances.⁹⁷ For instance, while in the late seventeenth century, the Sangirese chiefdom of Tabukan still saw one of its foremost princesses married to the Maguindanao sultan,⁹⁸ by mid-eighteenth century Tabukan's notables married with those of Siau, the Company's main ally in Sangir.⁹⁹ The late eighteenth century Maguindanao's attempts to expand political influence in Sangir through its proxy (Salawo) could therefore be understood as a resumption of inter-elite interactions cut short during the intervening years of the Company.¹⁰⁰

But the rejection of Salawo's marriage proposal to Princess Nanding did not preclude, and may even have incited Maguindanao's use of other forms of expansionary tactics, namely raiding. In the destructive Malurang-Maguindanao raid of Siau in 1765 to revenge Salawo's death, Princess Nanding herself and her betrothed Pahawuateng, the Prince of Tabukan, were among those captured and taken to Maguindanao.¹⁰¹ Aboard ten large vessels, the raiding party burned three major settlements, stole Siau's precious cannon and captured no less than fifty people.¹⁰²

The Sangirese chiefs hurriedly deputized one of their own, the raja of Manganitu named Daniel Katiandaho, to negotiate and ransom the

97. These Sangirese chiefdoms were Siau, Tagulandang, Kandhar (or Kendahe), Taruna, Manganitu and Tabukan. The last four are all found in the island of Sangir Besar (*Groot Sangir*).

98. Saleeby, *Studies in Moro History, Law and Religion*: 38.

99. Shinzo Hayase, Domingo M. Non, & Alex J. Ulaen (comp.), *Silsilas/Tarsilas (Genealogies) and Historical Narratives in Sarangani Bay and Davao Gulf Regions, South Mindanao, Philippines, and Sangihe-Talaud Islands, North Sulawesi, Indonesia* (Kyoto: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, 1999): 157–59.

100. Maguindanao connections with the polities south of Mindanao including those found in Sangir and Sulawesi are known in the historical records to have existed as early as the sixteenth century. See for instance, J. N. Wiersma, "Geschiedenissen van Ratahan en Passan van de vroegste tijden tot op den tegenwoordigen tijd, volgens de geheime overleveringen der ouden van dagen", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië* 18 (1871): 213.

101. Also known as "Daniel Paparang." See Hayase, Non and Ulaen (comp.), *Silsilas/Tarsilas (Genealogies) and Historical Narratives*, 182.

102. The raid likely saw the participation of the ambitious Maguindanao noble Datu Topang with his own kinsmen from Sulu and Maguindanao alongside the Malurang peoples. NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 8135, Letter of the Governor of Maluku to Batavia, 15.

aristocratic captives. Katiandaho succeeded in returning the couple Nanding and Pahawuateng back to Sangir in 1766. Pahawuateng later earned the Sangirese epithet “*I tuang su Maguindanao*” or the “chief in Maguindanao.”¹⁰³ But there was a condition levied upon the young Pahawuateng, material indebtedness payable through trade. Sultan Pahar ud-Din Maguindanao gave Pahawuateng unspecified kind of goods (probably including Indian textiles as well as opium) worth five hundred *rix-dollars* to be exchanged for Sangirese produce. The sultan was said to have uttered:

[B]ring these goods to Sangir and exchange them with shark’s fins, *trepan*, bird’s nest and [coconut] oil. My grandson, ask permission from the Company so you will be able to carry those goods [i.e., *trepan*, etc. to Maguindanao]. Then I would return the nine canons which the Malurang people brought from Siau as well as some subjects of Siau and Manganitu raided by the Malurang.¹⁰⁴

The Maguindanao’s capture of the Sangirese nobles was therefore only a prelude to the making of economic and political vassals. Salawo and Pahawuateng represent two examples of how alliances between polities could be forged. While Salawo, a Maguindanao proxy chief, represented an attempt for peaceful alliance through marriage, Pahawuateng represented the coercive impulse of Maguindanao to establish direct influence over a weaker neighbor. In the latter case, Maguindanao acted as a legitimizing power and merchant-lender in a manner not dissimilar to that of the Company. Pahawuateng’s “debt” remained unpaid, supposedly providing the Maguindanaos a reason to return to Sangir through their annual expeditions.¹⁰⁵ Pahawuateng eventually married his former fellow captive Nanding, the Princess of Siau, and remained an active participant in the Company-led expeditions against the roaming Maguindanao raiders. By rejecting Maguindanao’s intervention, the most powerful Sangirese chiefdoms – Tabukan and Siau – in effect affirmed their political and military alliance with the Company. But not all Sangirese chiefs chose this path: at least one of them openly declared support for the Maguindanaos.

103. Hayase, Non and Ulaen (comp.), *Silsilas/Tarsilas (Genealogies) and Historical Narratives*: 182.

104. NA, VOC 8143, Meeting of the Political Council, 9 October 1780, fol. 7.

105. Ibid.

The transfer of alliance of the *raja* of Manganitu from the Company to the Maguindanao was seen by the Sangirese themselves using the lens of family. When *raja* Daniel Katiandaho of Manganitu was deputized by his fellow *rajas* of Sangir in 1766 to redeem the aristocratic captives Nanding and Pahawuateng, the *rajas* counted on Katiandaho's experience in Maguindanao. Back in 1741, Katiandaho, then a mere *jogugu* of Manganitu, was sailing to Talaud when his vessel allegedly drifted into Maguindanao's waters due to contrary winds. He returned to Sangir only after more than a year of being held captive by the sultan.¹⁰⁶ Sources are unclear as to his activities during and immediately after his captivity but there is a hint at the establishment of kinship-based ties between Manganitu and Maguindanao. Daniel Katiandaho's son named Salomon¹⁰⁷ left Manganitu for Malurang in 1785 supposedly to assist his family counter the Spanish advance in southern Philippines.¹⁰⁸ He was repeatedly referred to and accused by fellow Sangirese as being "related to the Maguindanao court".¹⁰⁹ In the attempted negotiation for a peace treaty between Malurang/Maguindanao and the Company in 1788, the *Raja* of Manganitu served as the "escort" of Malurang's chief to the Company's main fort in Ternate.¹¹⁰ Manganitu's ties with Maguindanao seem to have continued in this way even until 1805, when Salomon's son, Philip, threatened to sail to Maguindanao and appeal for support against rival Sangirese as well as against the Dutch in Manado and Maluku.¹¹¹

The resentment of the Manganitu chiefs towards the Company and other Sangirese chiefdoms, notably Siau, could be traced to Manganitu's

106. NA, VOC 8114, Ternate, Missive geschreven door de Ternaetse ministers aen haar hoog Eds. gedateert 14 September 1742 (ontvangen den 22 October 1742 per de chialoup de Kruijsser), fols. 81–82.

107. Named *raja* in 1769; Daniel Katiandaho was installed *raja* in 1752. NA, VOC 8163, Memorie- Jan Elias van Mijlendonk, afgaande Gouverneur en Directeur van Ternaten, 20 July 1756, fol. 9. Salomon replaced his father in 1769. ANRI Ternate inv.18, Meeting of the Political Council, 12 September 1769, fol. 43..

108. Hayase, Non and Ulaen (comp.), *Silsilas/Tarsilas (Genealogies) and Historical Narratives*: 200.

109. NA, VOC 8141, Ternate 3, Copia dagregister gehouden door den onderkoopman Hemmekam gedurende zijne commissie naar de Sangirsche eilanden (ontvangen anno 1780), fol. 88. fol. 77.

110. ANRI, Ternate inv. 55, Letter of D. Schierstein, Manado, 11 March 1788.

111. ANRI, Manado inv. 68, no. 3, Ingekoomen stukken zoo voor als tegen den koning van Manganitoe Philip David Catjandaho, 1805, unpaginated.

dispossession of land. From the late seventeenth until the early eighteenth centuries, Manganitu and Siau struggled for supremacy over the land of Tamako, “the most fertile of all of Sangir”.¹¹² Manganitu’s claim over Tamako had more historical basis than that of Siau leading a Company official to comment that the former had “equal if not more rights over Tamako”.¹¹³ Nonetheless, Siau succeeded in shifting the political favor of the Company into its direction. The chiefs of Siau had been allowed to settle in Tamako as early as 1695, while the chiefs of Manganitu were ordered to be expelled in 1733.¹¹⁴

The dissatisfaction of Manganitu with the Dutch-dominated state of affairs in Sangir materialized during the Maguindanao raids of north Sulawesi and Maluku in the 1770s. A fleet of twenty-four Maguindanao raiding vessels on their way to Sulawesi in 1777, anchored, replenished provisions and repaired vessels in Manganitu, within sight of its *raja*, Salomon Katiandaho. Salomon convinced the Company-appointed indigenous church assistant (*kerkmarinjo*) that “Manganitu is unlike Siau or Tagulandang which are continually at war with Maguindanao ... the Maguindanao are our special friends” and thus deserved Manganitu’s cooperation.¹¹⁵ Manganitu provided the Maguindanaos with an extra vessel as well as navigators who had knowledge of the region’s bays and inlets.¹¹⁶ The leaders of the fleet, the famed Tidorese prince Haji Umar, himself married to a Maguindanao woman,¹¹⁷ and the Maguindanao *anakhoda* Udung supposedly uttered to the *raja*: “The fire of war [against the Company] has now been lighted and ... we are glad that

112. NA, VOC 8163, *Memorie wegens den presenten staat van saaken in de Moluccos*, opgesteld door Jan Elias van Mijlendonk, afgaande Gouverneur en Directeur van Ternaten, 20 July 1756, 10-17

113. *Ibid.*

114. *Ibid.*

115. NA, VOC 8141, Ternate 3, *Copia dagregister gehouden door den onderkoopman Hemmekam gedurende zijne commissie naar de Sangirsche eilanden* (ontvangen anno 1780), see testimony of the schoolmaster of old Manganitu, Amos Christofel Frans Kiriwenno on the presence of the Maguindanaos in 27 June 1777, fol. 71.

116. NA, VOC 8141, Ternate 2, *Copia secretee resolutien beginnende met den 5 Februarij en eindigende den 1 September 1780*, see report of *Onderkoopman* Francois Bartholomeus Hemmekam on his visit to Sangir 26 May 1780, fol. 106.

117. NA, VOC 8141, Ternate 3, *Copia dagregister gehouden door den onderkoopman Hemmekam gedurende zijne commissie naar de Sangirsche eilanden* (ontvangen anno 1780), see examination of Sidano, a Manganitu-born kapitein, fol. 88.

the raja [of Manganitu] is very helpful.”¹¹⁸ In return, the Maguindanaos gifted Salomon with such prestige goods as a parasol, a metal morion and chain armor.¹¹⁹

This alliance was the reason why Manganitu was spared from raiding attacks throughout its height in the eighteenth century.¹²⁰ The *raja* was confident of the alliance that while other Sangirese chiefdoms either transferred their main settlement inland¹²¹ or built coastal fortifications to counter any attack,¹²² the plan to build any defensive structure (*ben-teng*) in Manganitu was thrice refused by the raja himself.¹²³

The notion of family ties was convenient to the Maguindanaos not only in cementing new alliances but also in claiming supposed historic rights over far-flung territories. Such is the case of Maguindanao's claim to parts of Talaud through familial descent. In 1770, the Maguindanao was reported to have distributed flags, parasols and canes to the various Talaud chiefs to assert its overlordship and perhaps to create indebtedness.¹²⁴ Sultan Pahar ud-Din of Maguindanao told the aforementioned Forrest who visited him in 1775 that Maguindanao had a claim to Talaud primarily through the marriage of his grandfather Sultan Barahaman (r. 1678–1699) with the Sangirese princess Bassing of Tabukan. The Company received reports that the Maguindanao had installed its own “king” in the Talaud settlement that fell traditionally under Tabukan's authority confirming that the Maguindanaos were keen in asserting

118. NA, VOC 8141, Ternate 3, Copia dagregister gehouden door den onderkoopman Hemmekam gedurende zijne commissie naar de Sangirsche eilanden (ontvangen anno 1780), see testimony of Jacob Lazoeck, goegoegoe of Manganitu, fol. 93.

119. NA, VOC 8141, Ternate 3, Copia dagregister gehouden door den onderkoopman Hemmekam gedurende zijne commissie naar de Sangirsche eilanden (ontvangen anno 1780), see examination of Sidano, a Manganitu-born kapitein, fol. 81.

120. ANRI, Ternate inv 55, Letter of D. Schierstein, Manado, 11 March 1788.

121. NA, VOC 8136, Ternate 1, Copie missive van den gouverneur en raad tot Ternaten aan haar hoog Eds. geschreven gedateerd 31 Juli 1768 (ontvangen anno 1768), fol. 10.

122. NA, VOC 8037, Letter from Ternate to Batavia, May 1770, fol. 31.

123. NA, VOC 8141, Ternate 3, Copia dagregister gehouden door den onderkoopman Hemmekam gedurende zijne commissie naar de Sangirsche eilanden (ontvangen anno 1780), see testimony of Jacob Lazoeck, goegoegoe of Manganitu, fol. 93..

124. NA, VOC 8137, Letter from Ternate to Batavia, May 1770, fol. 29

their “right-to-place” through descent.¹²⁵ Nevertheless their claim was refuted by the Talaud peoples themselves. In one of the Maguindanao expeditions in 1773, the natives killed the sultan’s brother “possibly [because] he was exercising his power too roughly, for the revenues are most cruelly collected from those defenseless islanders.”¹²⁶

The foregoing discussion illustrates the nuances of the Maguindanao interaction with the Sangir archipelago. The notion of kinship, particularly marriage, seems to be an under-recognized element in the configuration of warfare and alliance. The story of Salawo shows that marriage relations seem to precede raiding, while the captivity of Pahawuateng demonstrates that raiding could also be a prelude to establishing political and economic vassalage. Meanwhile, the case of Daniel Katiandaho illustrates that close family alliance with the Maguindanao could mean being spared of raids, although the invocation of ties through family descent did not always end successfully for the Maguindanao as their experience in Talaud shows.

Conclusion

This essay links maritime raiding emanating from the southern Philippines with two varieties of social affiliations: religion and family. It sheds light on how conceptions of religious and familial connections were pivotal to determining the conduct of raids. It provides concrete examples of how manifestations of religion and family served as channels for peaceful alliances, paradoxically at a time when the use of violence – in the form of raids – was particularly rife.

While the few scholarly works on maritime raiding in Southeast Asia focus on the causation of raids, this essay approaches raiding from its broader social context. It illustrates how the use or disuse of raiding was tied with the invocation of essentially non-violent forms of interaction. On the one hand, this shows how selected individuals – participants

125. The Maguindanaos reportedly appointed a person named Mahabata of the village of Lirung. This settlement fell under the traditional jurisdiction of the Tabukan settlement of Sarab (Sahabe) ruled by the family of Pandialangs. It is from this village that Bassing, the grandmother of the then ruling Sultan of Maguindanao, Pahar ud-Din (r. ca. 1755-1780), originates. NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 7935 (1776) (Banda), 136; see also Walter E. Aebersold, “Het verhaal van Makaampo”, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-en Volkenkunde* (1957): 161.

126. Forrest, *A Voyage to New Guinea, and the Moluccas from Balambangan*, 330.

of raids themselves – personally conceived and justified the raiding enterprise from the lens of family or religion. On the other, it recognizes how abstract notions of social connections like “religion” and “family” possibly shaped how and especially where actual raids were conducted.

Both religion and family were social affiliations used to draw the line between declared enemies and possible allies. Although there is little direct evidence of Islam playing the main motivational factor for raiding, the historical evidence strongly suggests that a common religious identity likely facilitated the establishment if not deepening of alliances among the various coastal rulers. Through Islam, Maguindanao could be situated within the orbit of inter-linked polities that had operated along the margins of and turned increasingly against the prevailing Company-dominated system. The role of kinship in raiding is however more concrete. While Islam probably connected Maguindanao with more distant regions such as Maluku and Riau, familial ties conveniently served Maguindanao in its relations with the neighboring Sangir archipelago. Maguindanao variably used marriage ties, raiding and captivity of Sangirese chiefs to establish political and economic dominance.

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The Age of the Sea Falcons

Naval Warfare in Vietnam, 1771–1802

Vu Duc Liem

“Lay troi cho chong gio nom,
Cho thuyen chua Nguyen thuan buom tray ra”¹

“Praying to Heaven that the summer monsoon comes soon
So the Nguyen Lord’s fleets can sail north favorably”
(Vietnamese proverb)

Introduction

In June 1786, over 1,000 warships and galleys sailed north to Thang Long (Hanoi), the capital city of the Le-Trinh government. The talented Nguyen Huu Chinh, known as “the sea falcon” (*hai dieu*) in his own time, initiated the campaign.² After several naval battles in rapid succession, the 300 year-old Le-Trinh court and its military collapsed within a month.³ The event signifies the advent of naval warfare as the decisive factor in shaping political establishment in the late eighteenth-century Vietnam. The navy assisted the Tayson brothers in establishing their supremacy from the Red River to the Lower Mekong during the following decade until their final defeat in 1802. The navy also helped Nguyen Phuc Anh, the sole survivor of Nguyen Cochinchina to gradually regain control over the Lower Mekong, and to launch a series of

1. Ngo Gia Van Phai, *Hoang le nhat thong chi* (*The Unification Records of the Imperial Le*), hereafter *HLNTC* (Sai Gon: PhongTrao Van Hoa Tai Ban, 1969): 336.
2. *HLNTC*, 83.
3. *Kham dinh Viet su thong giam cuong muc* [The Imperially Ordered Mirror and Commentary on the History of the Viet], quyen 46. Vietnam National Library, shelf no. R. 525.17–18.

annual “monsoon campaigns” from Gia Dinh to the coasts of central Vietnam before gaining victory over Vietnam and crowning himself as the Gia Long Emperor (1802–1820).

The development of naval power was a key factor in ending a 270-year period of strife in Vietnamese history (1533–1802). After Mac Dang Dung overthrew the Le emperor, different groups started fighting for supremacy, including the Mac, the Le-Trinh, Nguyen Cochinchina, the Tayson, and Nguyen Phuc Anh. By 1770, Vietnam had bifurcated politically. The north was under the Le-Trinh rule while the Nguyen family dominated the south, from Quang Binh to the Cambodian border. Then, in 1771, the Tayson brothers Nguyen Nhac, Nguyen Hue, and Nguyen Lu began their extraordinary military and political journey that became known as the Tayson Rebellion.⁴ Between 1771 and 1789, the Tayson defeated the Nguyen Cochinchinese army, thwarted invasions from Siam in 1785 and China in 1789, and overthrew the Le-Trinh in Hanoi. Following these successes, the eldest brother, Nguyen Nhac, crowned himself as Central Emperor (*Trung uong Hoang de*) and remained at their original base in Quy Nhon until his death in 1793. Nguyen Hue, the most militarily talented among the three, ruled over the former Le-Trinh territory in the north while the youngest, Nguyen Lu, was in charge of the lower Mekong. The heir-apparent of the Nguyen family of Cochinchina, Nguyen Phuc Anh, exploited Lu’s lesser military prowess and his early death in 1787. Having witnessed his family’s execution by the Tayson, the 14-year-old prince and few supporters fled to the swamps of the Ca Mau Peninsula before heading to Bangkok for help. During the following 25 years, he was repeatedly defeated by the Tayson and nearly starved at sea but he never gave up the fight because his version of success was built on two formidable pillars: the supply of wealth from Gia Dinh and a powerful navy. By the late 1780s, he slowly captured Gia Dinh, organized his warfare machine, constructed new fleets with support from local shipbuilders, western mercenaries, and Siamese, and started a decade long *campagnes de saison* against the Tayson.

The navy facilitated Nguyen Phuc Anh’s 1802 victory by providing him with flexible logistics across large distances, with effective navy-infantry co-operation, and with powerful artillery. Major theatres of

4. For the Tayson movement, see George Dutton, *The Tayson Uprising* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2006).

naval combat were located in three areas: the Tonkin Gulf, the central coast from Quang Binh to Nha Trang, and the waters stretching from the Mekong estuaries to the eastern Gulf of Siam. These three areas were also key fields of power contests that changed the course of Vietnamese history. Indeed, it would be difficult to write a narrative history of early modern Vietnam without reference to maritime violence and naval operations. Nevertheless, while Li Tana (1998), Charles Wheeler (2001), Nola Cooke and Li Tana (2004), and Charlotte Minh Ha Pham (2013) extensively discuss aspects of trade and cultural exchange in these maritime environments, very little analysis has been devoted to the interrelation between political geography and naval warfare in the making of early modern Vietnam.⁵

Overcoming this neglect requires reconsidering three conventional approaches to the country's naval history. The first is traditional nationalist historiography in which the Tayson insurgency is depicted as a "national movement".⁶ According to nationalist scholars, the Tayson military achievement exemplifies the glory of Vietnam's indigenous naval skill and technology. This influential view has dominated both the Vietnamese and foreign academic landscapes and obstructed the search for more balanced perspectives about the Tayson's rival, Nguyen Phuc Anh, and his military prowess.⁷ The second approach is related to the burgeoning interest in piracy and privateering in the South China Sea. It posits that the Tayson navy was heavily reliant upon piracy.⁸ In contrast

5. Li Tana, *The Nguyen Cochinchina: Southern Vietnam in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Ithaca: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1998); Charles Wheeler, "Cross-Cultural Trade and Trans-Regional Networks in the Port of Hoi An: Maritime in the Early Modern Era" (PhD dissertation, New Haven: Yale University, 2001); Cooke & Li (eds), *Water Frontier*; Charlotte Minh Ha Pham, "The Vietnamese Coastline: A Maritime Cultural Landscape", in Satish Chandra & Himanshu Prabha Ray (eds), *The Sea, Identity and History: from the Bay of Bengal to the South China Sea* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2013): 137–67.
6. Van Tan, *Cach mang Tay son [The Tayson Revolution]* (Hochiminh City: Khoa Hoc Xa Hoi, 2004).
7. Nguyen Luong Bich, *Tim hieu thien tai quan su cua Nguyen Hue [Study of Nguyen Hue's Military Brilliance]* (Hanoi: Quan Doi Nhan Dan, 1971); Nguyen Viet, Vu Minh Giang, and Nguyen Manh Hung, *Quan thuy trong lich su chong ngoai xam [Navy in the History of Resisting Foreign Invasions]* (Hanoi: Quan Doi Nhan Dan, 2012): 304–85.
8. Dian H. Murray, *Pirates of the South China Coast 1790–1810* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987); John Kleinen & Manon Osseweijer (eds), *Pirates, Ports, and*

to the lack in Vietnamese sources, abundant Chinese references to piracy and their alliance with the rebels have overwhelmed other approaches to the subject.⁹ Meanwhile, little attention is dedicated to Nguyen Phuc Anh's naval warfare,¹⁰ which constitutes a third problematic approach. Vietnamese scholars underestimate his naval performance because of Nguyen Phuc Anh's rivalry with the Tayson, and the nationalist presumption that he, as a "feudal warlord", was unable to earn any local support. Western scholars, meanwhile, have long underlined the western origins of technology behind early modern Vietnam's naval advances.¹¹

This chapter argues otherwise. It shows the peculiar importance of naval warfare in late eighteenth century Vietnam by focusing on coastal and riverine operations conducted by the Tayson and Nguyen Phuc Anh. Pierre-Yves Manguin has argued for the shift of shipbuilding technology and vessel use in early modern Southeast Asian waters related

Coasts in Asia: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives (Singapore: ISEAS, 2010); Robert J. Antony, *Like Froth Floating on the Sea: the World of Pirates and Seafarers in Late Imperial South China* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, 2003); Idem, "Maritime Violence and State Formation in Vietnam: Piracy and the Tay Son Rebellion, 1771–1802", in Stefan Amirell and Leos Muller, (eds), *Persistent Piracy: Maritime Violence and State-Formation in Global Historical Perspective* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014): 113–30. Recent research by Charles Wheeler draws insights from maritime subversions and political formation in Vietnamese history, but mostly concentrates on "piracy and smuggling in the South China Sea". See Charles Wheeler, "Maritime Subversions and Socio-political Formations in Vietnamese History: A Look From the Marginal Center (Mien Trung)", in Michael Aung-Thwin & Kenneth R. Hall (eds), *New Perspectives on the History and Historiography of Southeast Asia* (London: Routledge, 2011): 141–56.

9. For example, Antony suggests that the "aid from the pirates helped to sustain the Tayson regime and allowed it to remain in power until its final defeat in 1802", George Dutton argues that pirates "became a central feature of Tayson naval strategy and indeed the regime's economy between 1786 and 1802". Additionally, Dian Murray claims, "Chinese pirates participated in every major Tayson-naval encounter." See Antony, "Maritime Violence and State-Formation", 113; George Dutton, *The Tayson*, 219; Dian Murray, *Pirates*, 37.
10. Until very recently, only a few scholars interested in southwestern Indochina have mentioned Nguyen Phuc Anh. Geoff Wade, "A Coastal Route from the Lower Mekong Delta to Terengganu", in Cooke & Li (eds), *Water Frontiers*, 178–86; Li, "Ship and Shipbuilding in the Mekong Delta, c. 1750–1840", in *Water Frontier*, 119–33.
11. This is based on part of the observations of US Naval lieutenant John White who journeyed to Cochinchina in 1819 and offered a great deal of admiration regarding how skillful the Vietnamese were to adopt western naval technology. See John White, *A Voyage to Cochin China* (London: Longman et al, 1824): 265.

to the reduction of the number of local *gong*.¹² By contrast, this chapter contends that indigenous warships used on rivers and shallow coastal waters dominated Vietnamese naval warfare until the early nineteenth century, supporting earlier findings on naval warfare elsewhere on the mainland.¹³ Despite burgeoning interaction with the West in this domain, western shipbuilding techniques were secondary to local technology because of the latter's flexibility and ease in adjusting to the complex coastal and river system. There was, however, a great deal of technical adaptation that allowed the Tayson and Nguyen fleets to become more effective by solidifying the ship deck, introducing more effective cannon, and for transporting ships, constructing multiple-story vessels to increase loading capacity. This technical evolution and the dramatic expansion of naval warfare might suggest that the navy became the major source of military dynamism of the warfare in Vietnam (1771–1802) and a decisive factor in successful political projection.

Navy and the Power of Geography in Early Modern Vietnam

Vietnam has a long tradition of constructing vessels for use in river and shallow coastal waters. For centuries, naval warfare was an essential element of the Vietnamese military structure used for both civil wars and resistance against invasions from Champa and China. The strategy was to take advantages of the complex natural terrain: islands, estuaries, gulfs and lagoons, and to utilize flexible small craft to defeat enemies with insufficient topographical knowledge. The small shallow-draft boats could move flexibly and burn down fleets of the Chinese large warships in uneven and shallow riverbeds, narrow channels and tight battle situations. The tactics were frequently employed against the Sung and Yuan fleets as they approached the Bach Dang River in 938, 981, 1075–77, and 1288. When it came to coastal battles, however, Vietnam was a victim of Champa's naval raids. In the fourteenth century, the capital at Thang Long (Hanoi) was burned down by the Cham king

12. Pierre-Yves Manguin, "The Vanishing Jong: Insular Southeast Asian Fleets in War and Trade (15th–17th centuries)", in Reid (ed.), *Southeast Asia in the Early Modern Era*, 197–213.

13. Charney, "Shallow-draft Boats, Guns, and the Aye-ra-wa-ti", 16–63.

Po Binasor (Viet., Che Bong Nga). His fleets, according to Maspero, numbered over 100 vessels.¹⁴

By the late fifteenth century, however, the Vietnamese started their dramatic journey to the south, annexed the Cham kingdoms, and gradually staked claim over the lower Mekong. To move across such terrain meant engagement with water. Central Vietnam's topography had been a great challenge for overland transportation. The further south the Vietnamese entered, the more significant coastal logistics were, including profound dependence upon naval operations. Given the physical terrain of a very narrow coastline divided by numerous mountain passes, and almost no overland passages, travel by coastal vessels and riverboat was the only viable choice. Nguyen dynastic records suggest that the first overland communication network in Gia Dinh, known as the "One thousand mile" Road (*thien ly cu*), only appeared in 1748.¹⁵ A Chinese monk who visited Hue in 1695 also observed that "there is no overland travel among prefectures, (however) each has a river mouth, and therefore, communication among prefectures can be conducted through the sea."¹⁶

Expansion along that waterscape thus required the employment of a navy. Since the late fifteenth century, warfare in Vietnam largely operated on coastal and riverine waters, especially in the center where Nguyen Cochinchina was established in 1600. As a result, the coastal waters gradually became a centre of commerce and naval operations. With a 3,200-kilometer coastline, almost the entire population of Vietnam can access the sea along riverine networks. It is therefore not surprising that the areas stretching from Quang Binh to the lower Mekong were a major field of naval battles between the Tayson and Nguyen Phuc Anh. The central corridor from Nha Trang to Nghe An was of particular strategic importance. Running 1,000 kilometers along the Annamite Range with a narrow strip of land of 40–120 kilometers in width, it could be effectively controlled from the sea, along many estuaries, lagoons, and

14. Georges Maspero, *The Champa Kingdom: The History of an Extinct Vietnamese Culture* (Bangkok: White Lotus, 2002): 17.

15. DNTL, vol. 1, quyen 10, 141.

16. Thich Dai San, *Hai ngoai ky su* [Diary of Travel Abroad] (Hue: Uy Ban Phien Dich su Lieu Viet Nam, Vien Dai hoc Hue, 1963): 230.

gulfs.¹⁷ To the south is the amorphous landscape of the lower Mekong. Swamps, river systems, estuaries, ports, and the Gulf of Siam dominate the topography. Numerous islands around the coastline provide navigational orientation, shelter, seafaring supplies, and naval bases.¹⁸ This geography has played an important role in Vietnamese history and has allowed both state and non-state maritime actors to flourish.¹⁹

The dynamic relationship between the physical terrain and navy may have been responsible for the shifting power paradigm among the Vietnamese between 1600 and 1800. The evolution of naval technology allowed the Vietnamese not only to engage successfully with a complex natural landscape, but also to expand their political projection over the Cham, Khmer, and other groups. During their encounter with those peoples, the Vietnamese were able to learn from other maritime traditions.²⁰ Most important among these was probably the Cham, who were believed to have sailed across the South China Sea to the Philippines in search of gold during the eleventh century.²¹ When the Nguyen established their control in Cochinchina in the late sixteenth century, they relied heavily on coastal operations for both state-formation and competing with their rivals. By the end of the sixteenth century, Nguyen

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17. Notable among these are Cam Ranh, Nha Phu, Van Phong, Vung Ro, Da Rang estuary (Phu Yen), O Loan, Lam Bay, Xuan Dai, Cu Mong, Thi Nai, Nuoc Man, Tra Khuc Estuary, Sa Ky, Dung Quat, Tam Giang, Cua Dai (Hoi An), Da Nang, Chan May, Ha Trung, Nhat Le, Ly Hoa, Gianh River, and Vung Ang.
 18. Significant among these are Tho Chu, Phu Quoc, Hon Khoai, Con Dao, Ly Son, Cu Lao Cham, and Con Co
 19. Charles Wheeler suggests that "... before the twentieth century, waterways were the preferred and often the sole mode of transportation... When faced with mountain wall, Vietnamese, a coastal people, simply passed around it, in boats..." Charles Wheeler, "A Maritime Logic to Vietnamese History? Littoral Society in Hoi An trading World c. 1550–1830", Conference Proceedings, *Seascapes, Littoral Cultures, and Trans-Oceanic Exchanges*, 12–15 February 2003, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. <http://www.historycooperative.org/proceedings/seascapes/wheeler.html>. (accessed March 2017).
 20. P. Paris, "Esquisse d'une ethnographie navale des pays annamites", *Bulletin des Amis des Vieux Hue* 4 (1942): 353–54, 364, 425, 431.
 21. Roxanna M. Brown and Peter Burns, "Eleventh century Cham–Philippines Foreign Affairs", in National Committee for the International Symposium on the Ancient Town of Hoi An, *Ancient Town of Hoi An* (Hanoi: The Gioi, 1991): 101–06; Anthony Reid, "Chams in the Southeast Asian Maritime System", in idem (ed.), *Charting the Shape of Early Modern Southeast Asia* (Chiangmai: Silksworm Books, 1999): 49–53.

lords could successfully mobilize enough fleets to defeat the Mac dynasty in Hanoi.²² A large field for naval exercises was also established in 1642 in Hue, the capital of the Nguyen, which was in July used for annual practice, including training in firing cannon and rowing.²³

When Nguyen Cochinchina included the lower Mekong, its naval capacities were expanded dramatically through major shipbuilding centres along the coasts and upland timber sources, especially Quang Hoa (the mountainous area northwest of Gia Dinh). The Nguyen navy increased from over 100 ships in the early 1630s to 230–240 in 1642, and to 200 large and 500 small galleys in 1695.²⁴ By the mid-eighteenth century, a division known as the Hoang Sa fleet (*doi Hoang Sa*) was established and dispatched to the Paracel Islands for sea products and geographical reconnaissance.²⁵

Such a naval capacity permitted the Nguyen Lords not only to offset the Le-Trinh's advantages in manpower that sustained their land armies, but also to protect them from Dutch naval attacks following their alliance with the north. During the Trinh–Nguyen war (1627–1672), the Nguyen were able to repulse seven northern campaigns, mostly using artillery located on several ramparts along the Gianh Riverbank and naval fleets stationed on the river.²⁶ In 1672, they repelled a Trinh assault consisting of thousands of vessels in the Gianh River and Nhat Le.²⁷ One of the most impressive performances of the Vietnamese navy during this period was probably their successful encounter in 1642–43 with Dutch fleets sent to avenge the Nguyen capture of money, men, and merchandise from a VOC vessel wrecked in 1641. A Dutch fleet of five ships carrying 222 men was deployed to attack Cochinchina in Quang Ngai and Hoi An in the summer of 1642. The attack, however, failed with a price of more than ten casualties. In July of the following year, the fleet came back and attacked the Nguyen on the Gianh River. 60 Nguyen warships were mobilized to besiege the enemy: exploding

22. DNTL, vol. 1, quyen 1, 19–29.

23. DNTL, vol. 1, quyen 2, 47.

24. Michael W. Charney, *Southeast Asian Warfare, 1300–1900* (Brill: Leiden, 2004): 104.

25. DNTL, vol. 1, quyen 10, 145; DNTL, vol. 8, quyen 104, 246–47.

26. DNTL, vol. 1, quyen 2, 47.

27. DNTL, vol. 1, quyen 5, 75.

one Dutch ship during the battle killing the entire crew, while two other ships were heavily damaged.²⁸

Coastal topography has had a strong impact on the trajectory of naval history and the rise and decline of other political projects in early modern Vietnam as well. Especially significant was that of the Tayson who used naval power to upset Nguyen Cochinchina, culminating in one of the greatest military glories in pre-colonial Vietnam. The central river systems where the Tayson emerged are usually short and narrow and require shallow-craft boats for travel. Other natural obstacles included unpredictable sandbanks and shoals, especially in the Huong River's estuary. The region 100 kilometers to the south of Hue, however, offers many of the country's best seaports and deep gulfs in Da Nang, Quy Nhon, Phu Yen, and Khanh Hoa. The Tayson were able to utilize these geographical advantages at an early stage thanks to local navigators and Chinese merchants. Their fleets anchored at strategic naval bases in Thi Nai (Quy Nhon), to isolate Hue from supplies. Since Hue "does not produce anything", this tactic succeeded by starving the Nguyen army and led to the collapse of Cochinchina.²⁹ By the late 1780s, the Tayson expanded their domain into a vast territory from the Red River to the Mekong Delta. The three brothers divided the area into three regional courts. From a military point of view, however, the Tayson fell into the same logistical trap as those they defeated. Their fleets had less space to operate, being cut off from supply and shipbuilding areas in the Mekong Delta. Around this time, Nguyen Phuc Anh saw an important opportunity. Transforming the Mekong Delta into a strong military base, he was able to dispatch fleets for annual campaigns aimed at the Tayson's strongholds from Quy Nhon to Hue until the enemy was brought to their knees.

Shipbuilding

In the late eighteenth century, Vietnam witnessed an unprecedented burgeoning of shipbuilding. The Nguyen Veritable Records (*Dai Nam*

28. DNTL, vol. 1, quyen 3, 48; Hoang Anh Tuan, *Silk for Silver* (Brill: Leiden, 2007): 77–81.

29. A letter from Cochinchina by the Spanish father Lorenzo Pérez in 1774, in Phu Lang Truong Ba Phat (trans.), "Cuoc khoi day va chien tranh cua Tay son" (Tayson's Rebellion and Wars), *Su Dia* 21 (1971): 56.

Thuc Luc) mention Nguyen Phuc Anh's order to construct vessels several times a year during the 1790s. Realizing that the navy was the backbone of his war machine, ship-construction became his ultimate concern.³⁰ The production of vessels did not only fulfil the rapid demand by the Nguyen's fleets, but served also as an important trade commodity with the Siamese in exchange for iron, saltpeter, and guns.³¹

The Siamese acquisition of Vietnamese vessels clearly confirmed regional recognition of their advanced shipbuilding techniques. A nineteenth-century poem reveals their admiration for the Vietnamese as "skillful carpenters. They like eating crocodile meat. They settled along rivers and possessed great expertise in boats".³² Siamese *kular* ships were identical to the Malay-Cham's *kora-kora* and to the Vietnamese *ghe tau* that were mostly constructed along the Gulf of Siam's eastern coast, in Ha Tien, Phu Quoc, Long Xuyen, and An Giang.³³ Those places, as the

30. The British diplomat John Barrow, who came to Gia Dinh in 1792–1793, observed that the Nguyen prince was an "intendant of the ports and arsenals, master shipwright of the dockyard, and chief engineer of all the works... In the former, not a nail is driven without first consulting him; nor a gun mounted on the latter but by his orders. He not only enters into the most minute detail in drawing up instructions, but actually sees them executed himself." John Barrow, *A Voyage to Cochinchina, in the Years 1792 and 1793: To Which Is Annexed an Account of a Journey Made in the Years 1801 and 1802, to the Residence of the Chief of the Booshuana Nation* (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1806): 277.

31. At least two entries in the Bangkok Chronicle, reign I (Rama I), reveal the exchange of the Nguyen's ships for Siamese support. "If and when Nguyen Phuc Anh (Ong Chiang Su) asked for military help, the king would be willing to send an army to help. However, to travel overland would be too far, and in going by sea, there would be only 70 to 80 ships available at the capital ... therefore whenever Nguyen Phuc Anh was free from fighting, it was asked that he construct some 60 or 70 *kular* ships, along with a very fine *kular* for the king's use and sent these to the king. ... On the first day of the waxing moon of the eleventh month, in that year of Pig, the king of Annam sent a letter asking to purchase 1000 flintlock guns ... With this came thirty Vietnamese hammocks to be presented to the king, and also seventy warships that had been ordered constructed. The ships were taken and moored at the Bang-o Peninsular at the king's order, and on Thursday, the second day of the waning moon of the third month, the king ordered that 200 hap in weight of iron for wharfs and 200 guns be sent out as gifts to the king of Annam." Thadeus and Chanin Flood (trans.), *The Dynastic Chronicles Bangkok Era, the First Reign* (Tokyo: Center for East Asian Culture, 1978): 167, 174–75.

32. Davisak Puaksom, *Khon Plaek na Nana Chat Khong Krung Sayam* [The Strangers of Siam] (Bangkok: Matichon Publishing, 2003): 42.

33. For the Malay–Cham's *kora-kora*, see Manguin, "The Vanishing Jong: Insular Southeast Asian fleets in war and trade (15th–17th centuries)", in Reid (ed.)

Nguyen chronicle states, were frequent suppliers of Nguyen Phuc Anh's navy. The 1789 order, for instance, requested the construction of more than 40 large warships (*dai chien chu*) and more than 100 *ghe tau* vessels. Officers in Tran Bien, Tran Dinh, and Vinh Tran also provided a considerable amount of timber. Every group of 40 soldiers were required to provide enough planks to construct one ship. Among Nguyen Phuc Anh's priorities after capturing Saigon in 1788 was the recruitment of crews and equipment for the fleets.³⁴ Large shipyards and construction sites were erected along the riverbank to the northeast of Gia Dinh that was said to be 1.5 kilometers in length.³⁵

The results of the shipbuilding industry during the 1790s were extremely impressive. The Veritable Records confirm that until 1821, 3,190 vessels of all sorts were constructed by the Nguyen. The same reference indicates that in the time of Nguyen Phuc Anh (1778–1820), the dynasty built 235 *ghe bau* vessels, 460 *Sai* warships, 490 warships, 77 large warships, 60 sailing ships in western style, 100 *O* vessels, and 60 *Le* vessels, which in total numbered 1,482.³⁶ Such a dramatic increase in ship construction was crucial for the success of the Nguyen's monsoon campaign (1792–1799). The industry was able to provide not only sufficient vessels to the navy but also a large number to regional markets in exchange for weapons and other supplies. Portuguese and Chinese merchants from Macau and Manila reportedly purchased vessels from

Southeast Asia in the Early Modern Era, 206. “*Bau*” is probably the Vietnamese pronunciation of the Malay term *prao*. We do not have a precise understanding of why this is the case. Pham points out that a more detailed examination needs to be conducted to position “*ghe bau*” within the Malay shipbuilding tradition. She argues that *ghe bau* is not a typical Cham boat; and the words *proa* and *ghe bau* are generic terms for different kinds of sailing vessels that are too broad to draw any conclusions regarding cultural or technical exchange. See Charlotte Minh Hà Pham, “The Vietnamese Coastline”: 155. We can be certain however, of the wide use of the *proa* or *ghe bau* in Cochinchina's waters between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, and that the Vietnamese adapted this shipbuilding technique on their way to the south from the Cham. See Li Tana, “An Alternative Vietnam? The Nguyen Kingdom in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries”, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 29.1 (1998): 117.

34. White, *A Voyage to Cochín China*, 92.

35. Trinh Hoai Duc, Gia Dinh Thanh Thong Chi (Gia Dinh Gazetteer), hereafter GDTTC (Sai Gon: Nha van hoa phu Quoc vu khanh, 1972): quyen 6, 4a.

36. Li Tana, “Ship and Ship Building in Vietnam, 18–19th Century” (in Vietnamese), *Journal of Research and Development* 4.38 (2002): 81.

the lower Mekong for the transportation of goods in the South China Sea.³⁷

The introduction of western shipbuilding technology, although mentioned early in western sources, first appeared in the Nguyen *Veritable Records* in 1798 when the Nguyen prince asked several timber-cutting divisions to prepare planks for constructing “vessels in western style” (*Tay Duong dang chu*).³⁸ This supports Barrow’s account of 1797–98 that the Nguyen were able to construct “at least 300 large gunboats or row-gallies, five luggers and a frigate on the model of a European vessel”.³⁹ Their techniques earned not only regional recognition, as mentioned above, but also western praise. In his account of his early nineteenth-century journey to Vietnam, Lieutenant John White of the US Navy described almost every aspect of the local society, including its ability to adapt maritime technologies. As he observed, “Cochin China is perhaps, of all the powers in Asia, the best adapted to maritime adventure; from her local situation in respect to other powers from her facilities towards the production of powerful navy to protect her commerce from the excellence of her harbours, and from the aquatic nature of her population on the sea-board...”⁴⁰ Other accounts also revealed that Nguyen Phuc Anh purchased a western ship and disassembled it into pieces in order to acquire the construction techniques that had been used in building it.⁴¹

Nevertheless, Nguyen Phuc Anh did not systematically produce western-style ships. He made this choice because such ships were unable to operate flexibly in narrow rivers and along the shallow coasts. Instead, his design for local vessels focused upon the intensive use of cannon, the fortification of the decks, and multi-purpose structures to enable various military tasks. A good example was his initiative to change the structure of the *Long-Rudder* vessel (*Truong da chu*). Solid decks were constructed as fighting platforms and bamboo wattles were installed to protect the rowing-crews underneath. This technical innovation, as stated by the Nguyen chronicle, made “maritime transportation more

37. Li, “Ship and Ship Building in Vietnam, 18–19th century”, 84.

38. DNTL, vol. 2, quyen 10, 164.

39. John Barrow, *A Voyage to Cochinchina in the years 1792 and 1793*, 274.

40. White, *A Voyage to Cochinchina*, 265.

41. See for example Barrow, *A Voyage to Cochinchina*, 277.

favorable” thereby “strengthening the navy”.⁴² In the same manner, the Nguyen fleets were able to introduce a number of innovative ships. Although mentioned in only few written references, images of these clever vessels were carved on nine bronze Tripod Cauldrons (*cuu dinh*) in the Hue Grand Palace, among them the *Da Tac/Sach* vessel (*Da tac chu* on *Cao dinh*) with three masts; the *Lau* vessel (*Lau chu*, on *Nhan dinh*), a two-story warship; the *Mong Dong* vessel (*Mong dong chu* on *Chuong dinh*) with a hull placed on the top (see Figure 4.1); the *Dinh* vessel (*Dinh chu* on *Thuan dinh*) and the *Le* vessel (*Le chu* on *Tuyen dinh*), high-speed warships with a large number of rowers, and the *O* vessel (*O chu* on *Du dinh*) with two large sails.⁴³

Arguably, competition in shipbuilding contributed to the changes that during the mid-1790s turned the tide of warfare in favour of the Nguyen. In contrast to the Nguyen, the Tayson were in a difficult position in expanding their shipbuilding capacity, especially after the loss of Gia Dinh (1788). In order to avoid the Tayson’s infantry and war elephants, Nguyen Phuc Anh brought into play naval mobility and effective artillery. These two advantages allowed him to move along the central coasts and control coastal transportation. The rise of the navy changed the military landscape, expanded the theatre of combat, introduced new tactics of operation, and contributed to shifting regional power in Vietnam.

Cannon and Naval Weaponry

One of the most important adaptations of the Vietnamese navy to western technology was the extensive use of cannon. However, this was actually a continuation of the strong firearm tradition developed in Vietnam from the fourteenth century onwards.⁴⁴ Both Nguyen Phuc Anh and the Tayson increasingly depended upon firearms and cannon for combat on land and sea. In most of the naval battles discussed below,

42. DNTH, vol. 2, quyen 1, 25.

43. All those warships were carved on the Nguyen’s nine bronze *ting* in the Hue Grand Palace.

44. Ngo Si Lien, *Dai Viet su ky toan thu* (Dayue Shiji Quanshu) [Complete Book of the Historical Record of Dai Viet] (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Toyo Bunka Kenkyujo, 1984–86): 1.464



Figure 4.1: Image of a *Mong Dong* warship taken from the Nguyen imperial tripod cauldrons in Hue (photograph: the author)

cooperation between vessel- and fortress-based artillery was essential to their success.

Between 1600 and 1800, the arrival of Westerners, most notably the Portuguese, Dutch, British, and French, introduced new elements into Vietnamese military technology. Political divisions and the state of antagonism between the Trinh and Nguyen families encouraged both sides to acquire as many firearms as possible, particularly European-made heavy cannon. The arms race between the Trinh and Nguyen soon made them the most powerful armed forces along the eastern part of the mainland.

The paramount element of the seventeenth-century Nguyen's forces was their navy, which was heavily armed with Portuguese cannon.⁴⁵ As shown in their encounter with the Dutch fleet in 1643, the adaptation of firearms on flexible small- and medium-sized shallow-draft ships provided for their effectiveness in coastal waters.⁴⁶ Dao Duy Tu (1572–1634), the chief architect of the Nguyen military, described a dozen types of weaponry using gunpowder in his book *The Secret Art of War*. He declared that, “the Ming’s cannon... was perfectly superior, but the later invention is even more fearful. Westerners are extremely talented; their guns are miraculous. Our predecessors learned from

45. Li, *Nguyen Cochinchina*, 45.

46. Hoang Anh Tuan, *Silk for Silver*, 78–83.

them.”⁴⁷ Among the projectile weaponry was the “fired ball”, an effectively destructive device in combat.⁴⁸ The shell was made from pig iron, filled with gunpowder and ten other smaller balls cast in the same technique and positioned inside the large one. Therefore, emergence of the Nguyen fleets was partly due to their ability to forge cannon with western assistance like that of Jean de la Croix.⁴⁹ Such advanced firearm production allowed Cochinchina to successfully repulse the Trinh’s seven great campaigns between 1627 and 1672.

When the Tayson brothers rebelled in 1771, their firearms came from different suppliers and were strengthened by their own innovative deployment. Westerners were always expected to be the most important firearm providers. While very few records could quantify the weaponry imported by the Tayson, their intensive use of gunpowder and artillery suggests the acquisition of a considerable number. They also organized saltpeter production in Tran Ninh, Nghe An, Cao Bang, Hung Hoa, and Tuyen Quang.⁵⁰ This resulted in an abundant supply of gunpowder, as was clearly reflected during the 1786 siege of Hue where their opponents, the Trinh, ran out of gunpowder after two hours fighting, and were annihilated.⁵¹ Such successful uses of artillery paved the way for the Tayson’s notable triumphs against Nguyen Cochinchina, Siam, and Qing China, and resulted in Tayson supremacy during the 1780s.

Arms procurement often also had a naval angle. In 1778, when a British merchant came to Quy Nhon, the Tayson heartland, on the ship *Amazon*, he was asked to provide two ships for military operations. The Tayson even suggested the possibility that Bengal government could send a military expert to train their army and lend a fleet in exchange for the use of some land.⁵² Other westerners observed that the warships and weapons the French sold to Nguyen Phuc Anh terrified the Tayson. The

47. Dao Duy Tu, *Ho truong khu Co* [The Secret Art of War] (hereafter: HTKC), trans., Nguyen Ngoc Tinh & Do Mong Khuong (Hanoi: Cong An Nhan Dan, 2001): 451.

48. HTKC, 452–53.

49. Charles B. Maybon, *Les Européens en pays d’Annam* [The Europeans in Annam], trans. Nguyen Thua Hy (Hanoi: The Gioi, 2006): 67.

50. Sun Laichen, “Saltpetre Trade and Warfare in Early Modern Asia”, in Anthony Reid, Fujita Kayoko, and Shiro Momoki (eds), *Offshore Asia Maritime Interactions in Eastern Asia before Steamships* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2013): 159–60.

51. HLNTC, 81.

52. Maybon, *Les Européens*, 114–15.

Portuguese also sent him eight or nine warships of different sizes and had a plan to set up a factory in order to sustain delivery. Two French ships, *Garonne* and *Robuste*, were reportedly anchored at Saint-Jacques (Vung Tau) selling commodities and firearms to the Nguyen.⁵³ In a letter sent to the Portuguese king in 1791, the Nguyen prince asked to purchase ten thousand muskets, two thousand cast-iron cannon, each weighing 60.45 kilograms, and two thousand explosive shells (twenty centimeters in diameter).⁵⁴ In addition, he sent officers to the Malay–Indonesian Archipelago to purchase weapons almost every year. In 1795, he even dispatched a certain mercenary by the name of Olivier to Europe to acquire more firearms.⁵⁵

Certainly, in the last decade of the eighteenth century, both the Tayson and Nguyen Phuc Anh attempted to employ artillery of all sorts in military operations, particularly for naval use. Each Tayson legion was provided with a large number of cannon. The Nguyen army reported that at least 35 to 40 cannon were captured after every victorious battle. In Thi Nai in 1801, there were six thousand cannon of all sizes.⁵⁶ On the other side, Gia Dinh became Nguyen Phuc Anh's stronghold, taking advantage from the burgeoning supply of Western, Siamese, and Chinese gunpowder, iron, cannon, and muskets.⁵⁷ Adding to those

53. Pham Van Son, *Viet su tan bien* [A New History of Vietnam] (Sai Gon: Tusach Su Hoc Viet Nam, 1961): 4.188.

54. DNTL, vol. 2, quyen 5, 82.

55. DNTL, vol. 2, quyen 7, 122.

56. Nguyen Ngoc Cu, "Nhưng ngày tàn của Tay son dưới mắt các giáo siphuong tây (The Last Days of Tayson in the eyes of the Western Missionaries)", *Su dia* 21 (1971): 168.

57. Bronze was most popularly used in making cannon and other types of gunpowder weapons in early modern Vietnam. Cast iron cannon was also used during the eighteenth century. Li Tana suggests that Cochinchina also acquired iron cannon from Asian markets. See Li, *The Nguyen Cochinchina*, 72. In Tonkin, Dutch sources give us more details on many occasions, including 1649, 1650, 1653, 1664, 1668, that the Le-Trinh court demanded supplies of iron cannon. In 1649, for instance, the Trinh Lord ordered the Dutch VOC to supply ten iron ordnance pieces for himself and to two for his son. The Company had to respond to the demands by removing some of its own existing iron cannon in Formosa and presented them to the Trinh in 1650. See Anh Tuấn Hoàng, *Silk for Silver: Dutch–Vietnamese Relations, 1637–1700* (Brill: Leiden, 2007): 139. The nine large cannon in Hue are bronze-casted; however, they were made in the 1830s, several decades after the period with which this paper is concerned. They are, in fact, ceremonial rather than constructed for practical use in warfare.

sources, the Nguyen army managed to produce their own firearms. A number of military factories capable of both casting cannon and making gunpowder were located inside the Gia Dinh citadel built in 1790. “The Gun Camp” (*Trai sung*) consisted of a 15-room warehouse storing big iron and bronze cannon (*Dong thiet dai phao*) and guns on wheels (*Hoa xa tru sung*), another 12-room storehouse for gunpowder (*Hoa duoc kho*), and a gunpowder factory located two miles from the citadel.⁵⁸ A saltpeter factory was also established in 1792-93 under the guidance of French Bishop Adran (Pierre Pigneau).⁵⁹

These new arms were either introduced to warships or transported to garrisons along the central coast. Nguyen fleets comprised of a variety of vessels including local ships, indigenous vessels with western technical influence, and a few western warships. An observation in 1819 confirmed that among their 200 warships, many were perforated for the use of 14 guns; 50 others were schooner-rigged, and constructed partly in the European style. Their sterns were European while their bows were mixed with Vietnamese elements.⁶⁰ Records of combat between Nguyen Anh and the Tayson since 1794 show the increasing role of cannon and handguns in naval fighting, landing operations, and besieging fortifications. The Nguyen army finally could close the technological gap and started gaining some of their first victories, particularly with the seizure of Dien Khanh (1793).

The dramatic renovation of cannon and naval weaponry changed the structure of warfare and the way armies were organized. The extensive use of cannon on warships and intensified sea-land cooperation improved the speed, scale, and strategy of warfare. Naval combat increasingly involved the exchange of artillery fire. In 1656, Nguyen fleets reportedly opened fire against the Trinh causing “smoke to fill the sky”.⁶¹ A painting by Samuel Barron shows the appearance of big cannon on those war-vessels (Figure 4.2), while a report in 1787 claims that some

58. GDTTC, quyen 6, 3a.

59. Barrow, *A Voyage to Cochinchina*, 273; John Crawford, *Journal of an Embassy to the Courts of Siam and Cochinchina*. (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1967): 504–05.

60. White, *A Voyage to Cochinchina*, 264–5.

61. DNTL, vol. 1, quyen 4, 60.

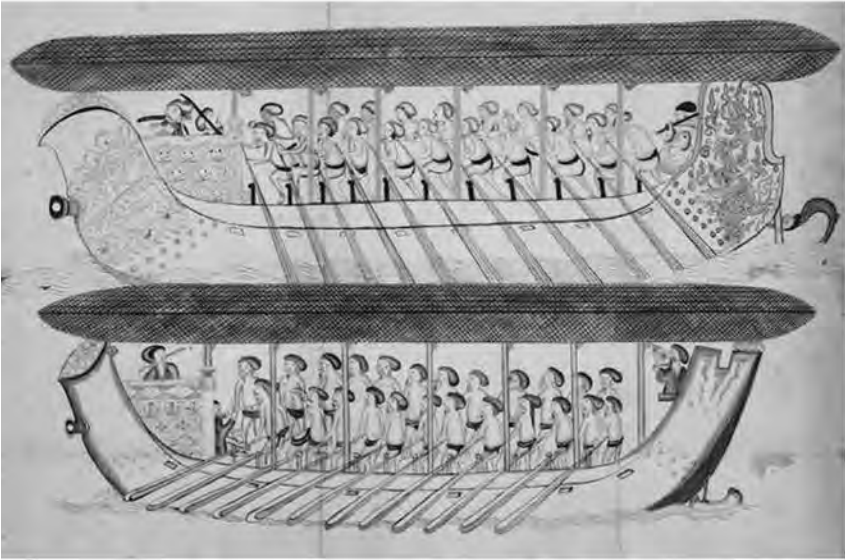


Figure 4.2: Image of seventeenth-century Tonkin warships, drawn by Samuel Baron in the 1680s (courtesy of Royal Society, London)



Figure 4.3: Model of a Tayson warship in the Tayson Museum, Binh Dinh Province (photograph: the author)

warships carried 50 guns.⁶² The Tayson were able to maximize the space in their warships and introduce up to 50 and 66 cannon (Figure 4.3).⁶³ Other reports also confirmed their advanced techniques for positioning big cannon on vessels to reduce their shock when fired. One of those ships known as a *ting*, was said to be much larger, sturdier, and better armed than other Asian ships, including Qing war junks. Each vessel had 80-foot (24 metres) masts, sides protected by layers of thick leather and nets and cannon weighing as much as 2,500 kilograms.⁶⁴

Tayson Naval Warfare

Naval warfare was significant in most military operations between 1771 and 1802, especially regarding coastal centres. While the navy continued to assist with logistics and mobilizing troops, the extensive use of ship-based artillery increased its combat capacity. It now waged war in a fluid theater of operations, particularly stretching along several hundred kilometer coastlines from Nha Trang to Quang Binh. The Tayson (and not Nguyen Phuc Anh) were the first to deploy naval campaigns to achieve military supremacy. During the 1777 Gia Dinh expedition, the 1785 campaign against the Siamese, and in the 1786 and 1789 Thang Long expeditions, maritime mobilization gave the Tayson a clear advantage through the speedy assaults they were enabled to direct at their unprepared enemies. One interesting feature of the rebels' military organization, which influenced their rapid rise and decline, was that their army consisted of a loose "confederation" of various groups of different background and ethnicities. Emerging in mountainous central Vietnam, their naval capacity essentially relied upon Chinese merchant pirates, the Cham, and a few Northerners such as Nguyen Huu Chinh. During the Tayson's early days, two Chinese merchants named Li Tai (C. *Li Cai*) and Tap Dinh (C. *Ji Ting*) reportedly contributed more than half of the rebel fleet.⁶⁵ Nguyen Hue welcomed

62. White, *A Voyage to Cochinchina*, 90.

63. Nguyen Ngoc Cu, "Nhưng ngày tan của Tay son", 163.

64. *Renzongshilu* [Veritable Record of the Renzong Reign] (Taipei: Huawenshuju, 1964), v. 189, 7 (dated Jiaqing 12. 12 [1807]), cited in Antony, *Maritime Violence and State-Formation in Vietnam*, 120.

65. Ta Chi Dai Truong, *Lich su noi chien Viet nam tu 1771 den 1802* [A History of the Vietnamese Civil War from 1771 to 1802] (SaiGon: Van Su hoc xuất bản, 1973): 67–68; see also Murray, *Pirates*, 32–56.

the presence of pirate networks along the southern Chinese coasts and the Gulf of Tonkin, providing the pirates with bases and official appointments. Many sea bandits characterized him as the “big boss of Yueh Nan” or “rebel patron of pirates”.⁶⁶ In 1796, a pirate called Wang Yaer received “certificates” (*zhao*) from Tayson leaders authorizing him to build ships and recruit gangs. Others had seals and official titles identifying them as armed chiefs of the Tayson navy.⁶⁷ When Quy Nhon became the centre of the movement, Thi Nai was established as a formidable naval base to protect the Tayson capital and control the central coast.

The Tayson’s first large-scale naval campaign targeted 20,000 Siamese and their fleets on the Mekong River that supposedly supported Nguyen Phuc Anh’s efforts to reclaim the throne.⁶⁸ In 1785, Nguyen Hue employed a traditional Vietnamese naval strategy to draw enemy ship into unfamiliar terrain. He hid his warships in river-islands from which the fleet successfully ambushed 300 Siamese vessels.⁶⁹ The battlefield extended several kilometers on the Mekong, between Rach Gam and Xoai Mut (present-day Tien Giang). Less than 10,000 Siamese survived and fled via Cambodia back to Siam. The Nguyen chronicle observes that, “after the defeat ... although the Siamese were boastful, they feared the Tayson like tigers.”⁷⁰

The Tayson’s second large-scale naval campaign was their victory over the Le-Trinh army in 1786. The northern navy was mostly used in launching campaigns against Nguyen Cochinchina and was permanently stationed in lakes connected to the Red River, not far from the Trinh palace in the center of Hanoi. On 6 June 1786, a Tayson fleet of 1,000 warships set sail for a surprise operation up the Red River.⁷¹ The

66. Pierre-Yves Manguin, *Les Nguyen, Macau et le Portugal: Aspects politiques et commerciaux d'une relation privilégiée en Mer de Chine 1773–1802* (Paris: l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1984): 100.

67. Robert Anthony, “Giang Binh: Pirate Haven and Black Market on the Sino–Vietnamese Frontier, 1780–1802”, in Kleinen & Osseweijer (eds), *Ports, Pirates and Hinterlands in East and Southeast Asia*, 43.

68. DNTL, vol. 2, quyen 2, 37; MTGP, however, claims that Siamese troops numbered fifty thousand. MTGP, 75.

69. Nguyen Nha, “Tai dung binh cua Nguyen Hue [Nguyen Hue’s talent in commanding army]”, *Su Dia* 13 (1969): 207.

70. DNTL, vol. 2, quyen 3, 43.

71. HLNTC, 83.

Le-Trinh navy was completely unaware of the attack until Tayson vessels approached the estuaries that led to Hanoi. In response, they dispatched fleets to take positions on the Luoc River and prepare for a pitched battle. Lining up horizontally with the enemy fleet, the Le-Trinh warships opened fire first. The shells, however, did no harm to their opponents. When the Tayson fired their own cannon, their shells exploded like “lightning-bolt[s] splitting an old tree into two parts.”⁷² The Le-Trinh navy was severely intimidated and fled from the battle in disarray. It is clear that the Tayson’s advanced weaponry and combat skills offered them a clear military advantage over both Nguyen Cochinchina and the Trinh.

However, the geographically expanding Tayson control over Vietnam provided their navy with more challenges than advantages. Besides Thi Nai, they had no naval strongholds. In addition, their fleets were at no point a unified military organization, but instead merely a temporary gathering of varied fighting groups, many motivated solely by economic interests. This lack of military prowess made them vulnerable and ineffective in the long-term. These weaknesses were gradually revealed and exploited by Nguyen Phuc Anh. First, the geographic realm of naval operations expanded so dramatically that it was impractical for the Tayson to maintain effective control. Second, the cooperation between different naval groups frequently waxed and waned during the Qing Emperor Jiaqing’s massive campaigns to suppress piracy in southeast China. A third weakness of the Tayson related to their naval organization, particularly the frail connection between the navy, the infantry, and war elephant forces.

Clearly aware of his enemy’s desultory war machine and logistical problems, Nguyen Phuc Anh pursued a unique strategy that deployed his fleets with exceptional efficacy: the *campagnes de saison* (1792–1799). The long, narrow central coast could be divided and controlled from the sea. His approach was simple. He employed the gap between the Tayson navy and infantry and isolated important cities such as Phu Yen, Quy Nhon, and Hue from northern supply lines. When his navy could maintain a considerable flow of provisions from Gia Dinh, he started seizing fortresses (such as Dien Khanh in present-day Khanh Hoa) and turned them into powerful military outposts. Close collaboration

72. HLNTC, 84–85.

among navy, infantry, and artillery helped to maintain those citadels against the Tayson siege until the next summer monsoon allowed the Nguyen fleets to sail north with reinforcements.

Nguyen Phuc Anh's campagnes de saison

Prince Nguyen Phuc Anh started his career with years of severe losses and exhaustion. After several naval and land battles in the Mekong Delta in 1777, his family was completely defeated. Nguyen Phuc Anh and a few retainers spent the next decade hiding in swamps and on islands in the Gulf of Siam. With Siamese aid, he was able to launch a counter-attack on the Mekong River (1784–1785) but this resulted in the complete destruction of his fleet. A western missionary states that he lost 400 vessels, 70 Chinese ships, and one Spanish warship.⁷³

The death of the youngest Tayson brother, Nguyen Lu (1787), and fighting among the others gave the Prince a perfect opportunity to regain Gia Dinh in 1788. The tides of war had now turned in his favor. He immediately organized a sophisticated warfare machine in the lower Mekong that allowed him to repulse most Tayson assaults. As their enemy was well known for its infantry and war elephants,⁷⁴ the Nguyen chose to target the Tayson navy and its weak connection with land forces. Geographical factors were also in favor of Gia Dinh, particularly the seasonal monsoon. In the first seasonal campaign in 1792, the Nguyen navy destroyed most of Tayson ships in Thi Nai. This base was located in a gulf where there was a major Tayson armada, reinforced with a shipyard, well-defended ramparts, and a large number of artillery. The strategic garrison aimed to protect the capital Quy Nhon from the sea and prevent Nguyen's maritime expeditions. In June 1792, the Tayson recruited 40 warships led by Chinese pirates and prepared a large campaign against Gia Dinh. Within ten days, Nguyen Phuc Anh commanded 128 vessels and made a raid on the base. The ensuing battle forced Tayson troops to flee, leaving behind 75 vessels, arms, and a destroyed harbor.⁷⁵ The defeat greatly alarmed Nguyen Hue who immediately prepared a massive campaign

73. Phu Lang, "Cuoc khoi day va chien tranh cua Tay son", 69.

74. HLNTC, 282–83.

75. DNTL, vol. 2, quyen 6, 93.

planned to include 300,000 troops.⁷⁶ However, the military mastermind abruptly died in the same year, leaving behind the promised campaign and an unfinished legacy

In the second campaign in 1793, Gia Dinh's fleets besieged a number of the Tayson's coastal citadels by expanding their naval and land operations. The result was the establishment of several well-defended outposts in Binh Khang, Binh Thuan, and Dien Khanh.⁷⁷ Located 200 kilometers south of Thi Nai, Dien Khanh (in present-day Khanh Hoa) became Nguyen's most strategically important northern garrison. The citadel could be assisted by a naval fleet on the Cu Huan estuary and became the departure point to launch coastal assaults from Quy Nhon to Hue. In an effort to recapture this stronghold, 40,000 Tayson infantry and crewmen besieged the fort in early 1794. In the summer, Nguyen naval forces that also set sail to destroy Thi Nai for the second time repulsed them.

Strongly convinced that if the coast was controlled, the "Tayson infantry would do no harm",⁷⁸ Nguyen Phuc Anh had a clear vision of how to maximize his naval power. From 1795, his fleets gradually dominated the coastal waters, and he was able to launch attacks from both land and sea to repulse Tayson ground forces. These coastal operations also disrupted Tayson logistical chains and left them no choice but to depend heavily upon overland transportation across difficult terrain. In 1799, the Nguyen army started attacking the Tayson heartland, especially near Quy Nhon, clearing many coastal garrisons and supply bases. After a decade of seasonal expeditions, Gia Dinh's navy had dramatically improved with not only large quantities of innovative warships and artillery, but also experienced crews and advanced combat skills. Expanding and solidifying the ship-deck could transport more men and cannon. They also adapted western training, including a system of naval tactics and signals that allowed better communication.⁷⁹ These improvements gave the Nguyen a decisive advantage. There emerged a profound relationship between

76. Dang Phuong Nghi, "Trieu dai Quang Trung duoi con mat cac nha truyen giao Tay phuong" [The Tayson Dynasty in the Eyes of Western Missionaries] *Su Dia* 13 (1969): 171–72, 176.

77. DNTL, vol. 2, quyen 6, 101.

78. DNTL, vol. 2, quyen 7, 114.

79. Barrow, *A Voyage to Cochinchina*: 274.

geographical terrain, topographical knowledge, and the human conduct of warfare. Not surprisingly, the major theater of Nguyen naval operation was the water world of central and southern Vietnam. Nguyen Phuc Anh who had spent three decades in this amphibious environment had a mastery of geographical knowledge that was now turned into an ultimate military advantage.

Towards the end of the 1790s, the Qing's increasing suppression of piracy threatened the partnership between the Tayson and Chinese pirates. This had an immediate impact on the dramatic decline of the Tayson fleets and crews and weakened the Tayson's naval resources.⁸⁰ Subsequently, they had to rely significantly on infantry and war elephants, and almost abandoned the seas. Nguyen Phuc Anh was prepared to dominate the coastal areas. He could now mobilize the whole army on boats, sailing north to engage with large-scale battles. In the 1796 campaign alone, the Prince had 600 warships transport 40,000 troops over 1,000 kilometers.⁸¹ The Tayson's leaders, who were now living under a Damoclesian sword, tried hard to reorganize their military system but it was not enough to turn the tide in their favor. To make their situation worse, Nguyen warships stationed on gulfs, estuaries, and rivers broke their enemy's defense system. In 1796, the central coastline was in hands of five Nguyen fleets. They broke through the Tayson's defensive lines and provided logistical help and reinforcements. The Tayson who controlled areas from Phu Yen to Quang Binh were detached from the north. Since the region was not well suited for rice production,⁸² the longer the war went on, the more desperate the besieged became. In 1800, their last attempts to supply Quy Nhon by sea were defeated, resulting in the capture of 150 transporting ships filled with grain, arms and gunpowder.⁸³ The Tayson's days were numbered.

The performance of Nguyen navy signified a change in the course of military history in early modern Vietnam. Naval power created a new warfare structure and tactics of land-sea communication that increased the scale and speed of operations. On that observation, the present discussion will end with the biggest and most decisive battle of

80. Murray, *Pirates of the South China Coast*: 42.

81. Pham Van Son, *Viet Su Tan Bien*, Vol. 4, 213.

82. Phu Lang, "Cuoc khoi day va chien tranh cua Tay son": 57.

83. DNTL, vol. 2, quyen 12, 209.

the Nguyen-Tayson war, the naval fighting at Thi Nai (1801). It vividly demonstrates the role the navy played in shaping geopolitics and political projection in the early modern era. It could even be argued that this battle gave birth to modern Vietnam.

In 1801, the five-thousand-*ha* gulf had stood as the Tayson's major harbor and naval base for decades. Although it became a frequent target of the Nguyen's monsoon campaigns in 1792, 1793, 1796, 1799, and 1800, it remained as a strategically defensive gateway to the capital Quy Nhon. When the Nguyen army expanded to the north of Quy Nhon, the gulf was essential for landing troops and launching operations to attack the Tayson heartland. Realizing that Thi Nai was their last chance to block the Nguyen armada at sea and prevent a complete counter-attack, the Tayson made an enormous attempt to fortify with a huge number of artillery and warships. Western sources testify to two fleets of 500 warships and 50,000 men.⁸⁴ To organize the defensive structure, 100 warships were stationed at the gulf's entrance. They were backed by two man-made mountains and fortresses filled with powerful artillery. Several hundred warships and thousands of cannon were located inside the base.⁸⁵ According to both Nguyen and western records, the battle took place for 16 hours between 27 and 28 February 1801, starting with 62 Nguyen warships attacking the first line of the Tayson fleet. 26 other large vessels entered the battle by firing cannon at the enemy vessels and launching flaming boats to burn down the base. As one account reports, the "sound of firing cannon shakes the sky. Shells fall like rain."⁸⁶ The victory cost the lives of 4,000 Nguyen soldiers, while the Tayson lost more than 20,000, their entire navy of 1,800 ships and 6,000 cannon.⁸⁷ Although these numbers were potentially exaggerated, the naval triumph confirmed Nguyen Phuc Anh's military superiority. As a result, the Tayson gave up coastal warfare and, in desperation, turned to passive defense. The battle was a watershed in the war that unified Vietnam. Its outcome determined what happened on land and the final defeat of the Tayson, but more importantly, shaped the future of Vietnam during

84. See Nguyen Ngoc Cu, "Nhưng ngay tan của Tay son": 165–66.

85. HLNTC, 335; DNLTL, quyển 30: Biography of Quang Toan.

86. DNTL, vol. 2, quyển 13, 220; Pham Van Son, *Viet Su Tan Bien*, 4.223–24.

87. Nguyen Ngoc Cu, "Nhưng ngay tan của Tay son", 167–68.

the following century, including the foundation of a new dynasty by Nguyen Phuc Anh in 1802.⁸⁸

Conclusions

The “sea falcon” was the title given to the military figure Nguyen Huu Chinh (d. 1787) by his contemporaries in appreciation of his mastery of naval tactics, but it is also a metaphoric image for a new age of warfare in early modern Vietnam where large-scale maritime combat became the major form of military operations. The period introduced some distinctive features of early modern naval innovations, including the continuing existence of indigenous-style vessel with extensive use of western cannon (manufactured in Vietnam under the guidance or influence of Europeans), and remarkable changes in ship-structure. The coastal and river boat superstructure was solidified to support larger cannon. The strengthening of the deck not only extended the ship’s loading capacity, but also served as a fighting platform. Better firearms and advanced naval tactics permitted high-speed operation on a larger spatial scale, and allowed the participation of watercraft and the navy in land operations. Who controlled the waters owned the final triumph. In other words, the late eighteenth century was an important chapter of Vietnam’s military history. Not only did its outcome shape the contours of the modern state, but also the consequent evolution of warfare diversified Vietnamese combat tradition.

Through increasing engagement with maritime Southeast Asia, a new set of ideas, techniques, and practices involving navy and maritime campaign were introduced into the country’s military repertoire. Naval combat between 1771 and 1802 became one of the most important aspects of warfare and had a profound impact upon state formation in the early modern age. During those decades, naval battles played a decisive role in regional competition and territorial unification. The dynamic relationship between naval warfare, topography, and state-formation determined the outcome of the three-centuries of regional competition among the Vietnamese and the navy became the answer for political superiority. The Tayson navy brought northern armies to their knees before Nguyen Phuc Anh built up his great fleets in the lower

88. DNTL, vol. 2, quyen 13, 220.

Mekong and defeated the Tayson in the decisive battle of Thi Nai. The rise of naval power in this era also shaped Nguyen political projection and territorial unification. Naval warfare became a significant maritime dimension of Vietnamese geopolitics. In this aspect, the power of geography determined the human choice of combat techniques, and shaped the territorial orientation of the Vietnamese state accordingly. The navy and the evolution of warfare shifted the country's power structure and transformed the South into a major player on the military and political stage.

On the basis of his research on Nguyen military adaptation, the intensity of this activity has led Frédéric Mantiennne to refer to the period 1790-1802 as "a revolution in the Vietnamese attitude towards the sea towards overseas countries".⁸⁹ As I have attempted to demonstrate in this article, however, Vietnam's shifting attention to the sea can be best understood as a point on a continuum within the ongoing historical trajectory that had been under way since the sixteenth century.⁹⁰ Different Vietnamese-speaking groups emerged from the maritime environment and the complex amphibious frontier, and developed their own livelihoods, spatial identities, and socioeconomic systems that diverted from those in the Red River area. Locating those on the periphery in this narrative, and by engaging with the emerging frontier through their employment and innovation of new forms of warfare, it is possible to suggest an alternative to the conventional centralized, inland-oriented and nation-state-oriented historiography. This naval history offers a new perspective in the search for Vietnam's pasts: a Vietnam viewed from the water and sea.

The link between warfare and early modern state formation, however, is not uniquely Vietnamese. The phenomena has been widely recognized in the global context, especially in Eurasia where modernized warfare

89. Frédéric Mantiennne, "The Transfer of Western Military Technology to Vietnam in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries: The Case of the Nguyen", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 34.3 (October 2003): 532.

90. Charles Wheeler, "The Case for Boats in Vietnam History: Ships and the Social Flows that Shaped Nguyen Cochinchina (Central Vietnam), 16th-18th centuries", in Paola Calanca et al. (eds), *Of Ships and Men: New Approaches in Nautical Archaeology* (Paris: l'Ecole Francaise d'Extrême-Orient, forthcoming); idem, "Rethinking the Sea in Vietnamese History: Littoral Society in the Integration of Thuan-Quang, Seventeenth-Eighteenth Centuries", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 37.1 (2006): 123-53.

was profoundly involved in state formation, political centralization, and territorial integration, in Victor Lieberman's groundbreaking work on early modern Eurasia and Sun Laichen's ongoing study of the "century of warfare" in eastern Eurasia between 1550 and 1683.⁹¹ The distinctive element of the Vietnamese part of this phenomenon was their early departure (c. 1520s) and late arrival (1802). Centuries of warfare gave rise to the new power paradigm in which territorial orientations moved southward and military campaigns headed northward. The task of unification became the responsibility of one man, Nguyen Phuc Anh, whose mastery of naval combat and powerful fleets not only awarded him with the crown, but also for the first time presented the space now known as "Vietnam".

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91. Lieberman, *Strange Parallels*.

Expansion and Internalization of Modes of Warfare in Pre-colonial Bali

Hans Hägerdal

Introduction

While Bali has attracted enormous attention by anthropologists and students of visual and performing arts, historical studies were underdeveloped until some three decades ago. Since the 1980s this has changed radically. A number of Western scholars have worked in the intersection between anthropology and history and greatly enhanced our understanding of the workings of traditional state and society. Local Balinese scholars and popular writers have boosted local history. Meanwhile, the establishment of colonial rule and the vicissitudes of Balinese culture in the twentieth century have received a fair share of attention from both Western and Indonesian scholars who have used the rich archival sources of The Hague and Jakarta.¹ Nevertheless, there are aspects that are clearly under-studied, not least those lying within the long period between the fall of Majapahit and the first Dutch expedition (1500–1846). The present chapter intends to contribute one aspect of the pre-colonial history of the island with the consequences for state-

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1. See, in the first place, Alfons van der Kraan, *Bali at War: A History of the Dutch–Balinese Conflict of 1846–49* (Clayton: Monash, 1995); Margaret J. Wiener, *Visible and Invisible Realms: Power, Magic, and Colonial Conquest in Bali* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995); Geoffrey Robinson, *The Dark Side of Paradise: Political Violence in Bali* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1996); Henk Schulte Nordholt, *The Spell of Power: A History of Balinese Politics, 1650–1940* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1996).

building and inter-island connectivities, namely modes of warfare and their political implications. It offers a long-term perspective of the interplay between internal and external conflict patterns from the sixteenth century to the eve of colonial subjugation. A question that has baffled observers for centuries is: how could the Hindu culture of Bali maintain itself in central Indonesia, surrounded by (more or less) Muslim islands that often took a hostile stance? No definite answer has ever been offered, and this chapter will not pretend to provide one. However, by seeing how patterns of military conflicts changed over four centuries, we may at least gain an idea of how periods of external military expansion and contraction influenced and linked with periods of internal turbulence. We may also relate the patterns of warfare to changes in military technology and with the development of statebuilding in neighbouring areas. All this may provide clues, first, to the ability of indigenous political organization to meet external military pressure, and second, to the motor of the internal instability that ended with the colonial invasion of 1906–08.

This undertaking is necessarily an *essay* in the original French sense of the word: an attempt. It is important to stress the limitations of the sources. Balinese *babad* (roughly but somewhat insufficiently translated as “chronicles”) are notoriously difficult to date but are usually from the late pre-colonial and the colonial periods. Moreover, their focus on the origins and genealogy of noble lineages limits the information that can be expected from them.² Literary works can give clues about the imagery and conduct of warfare although the stereotyped Indic models suggest some care in using them as sources.

For their part, Dutch archival materials provide an important but fragmentary body of information after the first visit to Bali in 1597. The attention of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) was seldom focused on Bali, but its systematic recordkeeping ensured that at least some information about the island was committed to paper. In spite of respectable spadework by scholars such as Willem Bijvanck (1894–95), Hermanus Johannes de Graaf (1949), Henk Schulte Nordholt (1996),

2. Peter Worsley, *Babad Buleleng: A Balinese Dynastic Genealogy* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1972): 82.

Adrian Vickers (1986) and Helen Creese (1991), there is more to be done here.³

There is also a very limited amount of non-Dutch European and non-Balinese indigenous sources that yield additional information on warfare, state, and society in pre-colonial Bali. These include Portuguese and other European reports or travel accounts from the early modern period.⁴ Indonesian outsider perspectives on Bali are occasionally given in texts from Java, Lombok and Sumbawa, islands sometimes involved in warfare with the Balinese, or even subjected to invasion and conquest from Bali.⁵

Bali and Southeast Asia from a Military Perspective

When the first Dutch visitors to Bali stepped ashore at Gelgel and met with the king of the island in 1597, their attention was drawn to the weaponry found in the royal watch-huts. They noted that the shotguns were of inferior quality compared to the European ones, and that the gunpowder did not have one-fourth of the power of their own stuff. They further noted the long and carefully ornamented lances, the shields made of ox hide “in the Turkish manner”, the blowpipes with attached “bayonets”, and quivers with poisoned arrows.⁶ What is interesting with this eyewitness account is that it partly parallels accounts of the nineteenth century. While new types of firearms including cannon were introduced by then, and the Balinese soldiers were even praised as

3. W. G. C. Bijvanck, “Onze Betrekkingen tot Lombok”, *De Gids* 58.4 (1894); H. J. de Graaf, “Gusti Pandji Sakti, vorst van Buleleng”, *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 83 (1949); Schulte Nordholt, *The Spell of Power*; Adrian Vickers, “The Desiring Prince: A Study of the Kidung Malat as Text” (PhD diss., University of Sydney, Sydney, 1986); Helen Creese, “Balinese Babad as Historical Sources: A Reinterpretation of the Fall of Gelgel”, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 147 (1991).
4. J. V. Mills, “Eredia’s Description of Malaca, Meridional India, and Cathay”, *Journal of the Malay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 8 (1930): 1–288; Hubert Jacobs, “An Abortive Mission Effort: The Island of Bali in 1635”, *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 53 (1984): 313–30; C. Wessels, “Een Portugeesche missie-poging op Bali in 1635”, *Studiën; Tijdschrift voor Godsdienst, Wetenschap en Letteren* 99 (1923): 433–43.
5. Hans Hägerdal, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects: Lombok and Bali in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Bangkok: White Lotus Press, 2001).
6. Aernoudt Lintgensz, “Bali 1597”, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 5 (1856): 207.

marksmen, the lances, shields and blowpipes occur in descriptions more than two centuries after the first contact.⁷ It goes without saying that Bali was not detached from culture and politics in the Insulindian world in the intervening centuries. On the contrary, as will soon be evident, Balinese troops were well known outside their inaccessible island. The conservative features of Balinese military equipment rather demonstrate that wars were sometimes won by other means than technological excellence, since Balinese troops were involved in a great deal of overseas expansion over the centuries. Of course, this point should not be taken too far: by the nineteenth century, the elite imported modern firearms via European merchants and carried the day against well-armed Dutch troops at Jagaraga in 1848 and at the first Lombok invasion in 1894.⁸

Then, is there anything intrinsically “Balinese” about Balinese warfare? In a wider Southeast Asian perspective this can be doubted. Blowpipes, lances, leather shields and daggers are traditional standard weapons, although blowpipes may have fallen out of use on Java by the late 1500s.⁹ Although elite detachments are sometimes mentioned, Bali conformed to a common pattern: anyone who could carry arms was a potential soldier. Naturally, this limited the tactics that could be employed. The European as well as Balinese sources speak of violent frontal attacks of the *amuk* type against the enemy, for example the successful exploits of the ex-slave Surapati against the Dutch on Java in 1686; this offensive onslaught was known also among Makassarese, Madurese and others.¹⁰ But there are also descriptions of defensive positions behind fortifications, such in Sokong 1701 and Jagaraga 1848, and cunning assaults and surprise attacks, such as Palaba 1700 and Cakranagara 1894.¹¹ While these tactics were less tinged with heroic ethics, they suited the practical concerns of small-scale societies: it was more essential to minimize losses than to display feats of heroism. Nineteenth-century data points

7. Hans Hägerdal, “War and Culture: Balinese and Sasak Views on Warfare in Traditional Historiography”, *South East Asia Research* 12.1 (2004): 81–118.

8. Van der Kraan, *Bali at War*, 6.

9. Charney, *Southeast Asian Warfare*, 36–37.

10. H. J. de Graff, *De moord op kapitein Francois Tack, 8 Feb. 1686* (Amsterdam: Paris, 1935); Charney, *Southeast Asian Warfare*, 12–13.

11. Hägerdal, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 1–3; 82–3; van der Kraan, *Bali at War*; Wim van den Doel, *Zo ver de wereld strekt: De geschiedenis van Nederland overzee, vanaf 1800* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2011): 121.

out that the endemic warfare among the small micro-states tended to consist in raids and robberies; pitched battles were usually broken off after one or a few people had fallen.¹² Religion played a role as providing an ideal of kingship and power. Classical Indian kingship tends to be obsessed with warfare, which is reflected in the literary works preserved on Bali and parallels conceptions in other Indianized areas of Southeast Asia.¹³ Nevertheless, the role of kings in terms of warfare may have changed over the course of centuries; we shall return to this issue later.

Expansion and dark centuries

The image of Majapahit looms large in Balinese imaginations of its history. Myths, legends and much later chronicle accounts refer to the ancient Javanese empire as a source for the political and social order. The three higher castes (Triwangsa, i.e. Brahmana, Kshatriya and Wesia) and at least some of the low-caste Jabas (Sudras) trace their origins to Java. The actual history of Majapahit rule on Bali is poorly chronicled and restricted to a few references in epigraphic and literary sources.¹⁴ The period following the decline and dissolution of Majapahit in the early sixteenth century is not much clearer. The well-known geographical treatise *Suma Oriental* by Tomé Pires (c. 1512–15) merely mentions Bali as an island with its own king (or kings) at a time when the Majapahit Empire still held out against Muslim competitors, adding that plundering raids were carried out from there.¹⁵ The equally renowned *Peregrinação* of Fernão Mendes Pinto (d. 1583), a mixture of fact and fiction, alleges that Bali was a pagan island dependent of the Islamic Demak Kingdom

12. P. L. van Bloemen Waanders, "Aanteekeningen omtrent de zeden en gebruiken der Balinezen, inzonderheid die van Boeleleng," *Tijdschrift van Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 8 (1859): 246–47.

13. Nineteenth-century Dutch reports described the king as responsible for declaring wars and concluding peace, after deliberations with the chiefs of the kingdom (Bloemen Waanders: 109). For a much-disputed view of late pre-colonial kingship, based on published Dutch sources and anthropological research, see Clifford Geertz, *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth Century Bali* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

14. C. C. Berg, *De Middelfjavaansche Historische Traditie* (Santpoort: Mees, 1927).

15. Armando Cortesão, *The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1944): 1.201–02.

but rebelled after the demise of a ruler in c. 1546.¹⁶ This is virtually all that can be gleaned from external contemporary sources before the appearance of detailed Dutch reports in the late sixteenth century.

By contrast, the late *babad* literature provides a set of narratives about the post-Majapahit Bali-wide kingdom centred in Gelgel close to the south-eastern coast. This kingdom has a defining role in the historical consciousness of the Balinese, since it took over the symbols of classical Javanese kingship. The narratives about the polity are focused on the various Triwangsa lineages and are undoubtedly streamlined to fit into an idealized pattern of kingship and ritual order.¹⁷ The Gelgel Kingdom is historically known to have existed up to 1686, and was therefore partly contemporary with the VOC (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie). The differences in outlook and aims of the *babad* writers compared to the VOC archival reports are however so great that it is unsure when and if they relate the same events.¹⁸

Nevertheless, some general conclusions can be drawn about the ability of the Balinese to expand outside their own island. In general terms it falls within the trend of “post-charter” states in Southeast Asia that stabilized in about the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries, as pointed out by Victor Lieberman.¹⁹ The establishment of these polities is clearly connected to what Anthony Reid has called “Southeast Asia’s age of commerce” in c. 1450–1680, where the presence of Asian traders and the demand for certain products in maritime Asia made for increasingly complex commercial networks and strengthened statecraft.²⁰ Although Bali was not a large-scale producer of commodities, sources from the decades around 1600 show that it was involved in such networks, bar-

16. Fernão Mendes Pinto, *The Travels of Mendes Pinto*, 392.

17. There are numerous *babad* texts dealing with the Gelgel period. The emblematic text, which has influenced much of the later *babad* literature, is *Babad Dalem* (Warna, et al. [eds], *Babad Dalem. Teks dan Terjemahan*), presumably dating from the eighteenth century.

18. Creese, “Balinese Babad as Historical Sources”, 236–60; Hans Hägerdal, “Bali in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century: Suggestions for A Chronology of the Gelgel Period”, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 151.1 (1995): 101–24.

19. Lieberman sees this as a global trend, paralleling Muscovy, Valois France, etc. and strengthened by “textual religions, expanding long-distance trade, firearms, intensifying warfare, and local experiment”. Lieberman, *Strange Parallels*, 2.765.

20. Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450–1680*.

tering cotton cloth, rice, cattle, horses and female slaves for household utensils and luxury goods.²¹

What is clear is that a considerable expansion of royal power took place in the course of the sixteenth or the early seventeenth century. A VOC document from 1603 asserts that Bali's eastern neighbour Lombok belonged to the Balinese king and was still "heathen" (that is, non-Christian and non-Muslim).²² Other documents from 1633 contain the somewhat unlikely information that the Gelgel ruler lorded over an extended area from Blitar in East Java to Bima on Sumbawa.²³ All this may reflect claims that were lodged by Balinese grandees when they met with VOC diplomats, but at a minimum easternmost Java (Balambangan) and parts of Lombok were under Balinese suzerainty for periods. The claims are reflected in the eighteenth-century history of the Gelgel Dynasty, *Babad Dalem*, that tells that the model of Indic kingship, Dalem Baturenggong, acquired these lands, presumably in the mid-sixteenth century. Details about the binding of Lombok and Sumbawa to his kingdom are missing. As for Balambangan, the chronicle gives a minor incident of a personal nature – the refusal of an East Javanese princess to marry the king, as the reason for the Balinese invasion and takeover.²⁴ The reduction of the causes for wars to similar incidents is quite common in Indonesian historiography.

In the first half of the seventeenth century Bali was therefore one of the 10–12 polities of greater consequence in what is today Indonesia, and it did not lack self-assurance. A document from 1633 testifies to the condescending attitude of the Gelgel ruler vis-à-vis the Muslim lord of Mataram on Java.²⁵ Moreover, it was the only one that was not formally Muslim. The uniqueness of the religious affiliation of the Balinese king-

21. B. Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, Vol. I, 20–21; J. E. Heeres, "Onze betrekkingen met de kleine Soenda-eilanden 1640–1648", in *Feestbundel van taal-, letter-, geschied- en aardrijkskundige bijdragen aan Dr. P. J. Veth* (Leiden: Brill, 1984): 179.

22. J. K. J. de Jonge (ed.), *De opkomst van het Nederlandsch gezag in Oost-Indië*, Vol. III (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1865): 160–61.

23. P. A. Leupe, "Het gezantschap naar Bali onder den Gouverneur-Generaal Hendrik Brouwer in 1633", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 5 (1856): 13, 30.

24. I Wayan Warna, et al. (eds), *Babad Dalem*: 81–82.

25. A. F. Prévost (ed.), *Histoire générale des voyages* (The Hague: Pierre de Hondt, 1763): 17–60.

dom may be more apparent than real since Islam was strongly localized at this stage and Muslim kingship contained much that was indigenous or Indic-derived. Nevertheless, the few contemporary sources suggest that religion was a real distinguishing factor, such as the Portuguese account of 1635 that the Balinese stood ready to receive foreign adversaries with lances smeared with pig's fat.²⁶

The phenomenon of Bali managing not only to hold its own but also to expand can be seen at several levels. The "iron-bound coast" spoken of by Raffles no doubt served as a deterrent for invaders. The aggression by the Javanese Mataram Kingdom in 1639–47 and intermittent hostility with the seaborne Makassar Kingdom of Sulawesi after 1618, showed that the enemy fleets were unable to gain a foothold on Bali itself although the Balinese were clearly at a tactical disadvantage. Demographic structure and economic basis constitute another factor: European sources from 1597, 1633 and 1635 affirm that Bali was extremely densely populated for this era with more than 300,000 people on an area of 5,780 square kilometres. That would mean a much higher population density than that of contemporary India or China.²⁷ The sources point it out as an intense rice society with some connection to inter-island trade.²⁸

An amount of political cohesion was also visible. Although archival and later indigenous data mention a number of rebellions against royal power, the Indic kingship was apparently able to maintain authority over the island as a whole. There is no evidence of permanent divisions of the island before 1650.²⁹ That is not to say that it was an administratively coherent realm, of course. Like other pre-modern Southeast Asian states it was a galactic polity where the vassals and dependencies were largely autonomous.

A fourth factor would be religious-ritual ideology that provided an efficient tool for fighting Muslim outsiders. This should not be exag-

26. C. Wessels, "Een Portugeesche Missie-poging op Bali in 1635", 438–39.

27. Lintgensz, "Bali 1597", 211; Wessels, "Een Portugeesche Missie-poging op Bali in 1635", 438. The figures make sense in view of later population data. Lieberman (*Strange Parallels*, 764) estimates the Southeast Asian average around 1600 at 5.5 people per square kilometer, to be compared with China (37) and South Asia (32).

28. Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, 1.20–21.

29. Hans Hägerdal, "From Batuparang to Ayudhya; Bali and the Outside World, 1636–1656", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 154.1 (1998): 55–93.

gerated but there is some evidence that the king took care that at least the nobility of the realm did not embrace Islam. The account of the missionary Justus Heurnius from 1638 indicates the role of the *sengguhu* (commoner priests) in addressing the spiritual needs of the strata below the Triwangsa.³⁰ Balinese “Hinduism” (to use an anachronistic concept) was nevertheless so peculiar to the local milieu that it did not work as an identity marker in foreign lands. It is known from Dutch documents from the VOC era that Balinese who lived in Java and Batavia as slaves or soldiers rapidly accepted Islam while still strongly identifying themselves as Balinese.³¹

Finally, a fifth factor was the quality of Balinese detachments as fighting forces. Judging from the first Dutch eyewitness accounts Bali may have had some features of a gunpowder state, similar to some contemporary trade-based states where the possession of cannon and muskets gave an edge to the royal striking force. Unfortunately there are few detailed descriptions of Balinese military tactics from the early modern period. From the frequent employment of Balinese soldiers in the ranks of the VOC troops we know that their fighting qualities were appreciated. Like the peoples of South Sulawesi, the Balinese used lances, the *kris*, and blowpipes, while firearms were also occasionally used.³² The report of the violent battle between the Balinese ex-slaves and the Dutch detachment of François Tack at Kartasura in 1686, speaks of furious frontal assaults against the enemy lines where the chiefs did not spare themselves. Although the Balinese annihilated the enemy, Surapati was the only leader who survived.³³ However, accounts of the Balinese expansion on Lombok in the early 1700s also tell of the employment of cunning strategies to encircle or out-smart the enemy. From a Dutch horizon the enchanted vision of Bali was entirely missing in the pre-colonial period; on the contrary the island was seen as a dangerous place prone to violence. Similar views are sometimes traced in indigenous literature.

30. P. A. Leupe, “Schriftelijck rapport gedaen door den predicant Justus Heurnius”, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 3 (1855): 259–60.

31. C. Lekkerkerker, “De Baliërs van Batavia”, *Indische Gids* 40 (1918): 409–31.

32. Firearms were known on Java from the fifteenth century at the latest; a Chinese cannon dated 1421 has been found there. M. C. Ricklefs, *War, Culture and Economy on Java 1677–1726*, 13.

33. de Graff, *De moord op kapitein Francois Tack*, 8 Feb. 1686, 97–98; Ricklefs, *War, Culture and Economy on Java 1677–1726*, 95.

In the *Babad Lombok* (late eighteenth century?) the Balinese warriors are portrayed as frightening and formidable.³⁴

Some of the Balinese opportunities for expansion during the Gelgel period can no doubt be attributed to the lack of strong major states in the neighbourhood during long periods. The brief heyday of Demak on Java came to an end in about 1546 and the traditional kingdoms in East Java, Lombok and Sumbawa were small and hardly expansive. The situation changed some years into the seventeenth century. The agrarian-based Mataram with its great population resources came to constitute a real threat, as did the trade-oriented Makassar realm Gowa-Talloq. Both had an Islamic profile and, in the case of Makassar, a proselytizing agenda.³⁵ Bali lost temporary control of Lombok to Makassar after 1618, although details about the military clashes are missing. A drawn-out war with Mataram for the possession of Balambangan was fought between 1639 and 1647 and even included a few Javanese invasion attempts. The Balinese were partly saved by the imperial overstretch of its enemies. Javanese peasant conscripts were unsuited for extended campaigns and the invasion force of 1646–47 simply melted away despite a few claimed victories.³⁶ The kings of Gowa and Talloq had to attend a wide-stretching system of dependencies from East Kalimantan to the northeastern coast of Timor and may have had limited opportunity to seriously threaten Bali.³⁷ The generally friendly relationship between Bali and the VOC was probably of less consequence here. The vital role of the VOC came somewhat later, when the Dutch and their allies inflicted several defeats on their rivals in the archipelago, thereby easing the pressure on Bali.

34. Lalu Gde Suparman (tr.), *Babad Lombok* (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1994): 396–401.

35. Leupe, “Schriftelijck rapport gedaen door den predicant Justus Heurnius”, 438–39; Wessels, “Een Portugeesche Missie-poging op Bali in 1635”, 438–39.

36. Hägerdal, “From Batuparang to Ayudhya; Bali and the Outside World, 1636–1656”, 65–75; W. Ph. Coolhaas (ed.), *Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, Vol. II: 1639–1655 (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1964): 309–10.

37. For the extent of the Makassarese realm, see Andaya, *The Heritage of Arung Palakka*. The expeditions and the imposition of loose suzerainty over certain places on Timor are discussed in Hans Hägerdal, *Lords of the Land, Lords of the Sea: Conflict and Adaptation in Early Colonial Timor, 1600–1800* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2012): 83–86, 165–66.

Transition to internalized warfare and the second wave of expansion

Like most Southeast Asian polities, Bali was characterized by decentralization rather than administrative cohesion. A document from 1620 speaks of 33 minor “kings” who governed under the main ruler, the Raja Dalem.³⁸ Indigenous *babad* likewise mention a number of Triwangsa lineages who governed various parts of the island. Both VOC and Balinese sources mention occasional rebellions by vassals during the Gelgel period, but the central king and his two *patih*s (main ministers) seem to have maintained the upper hand. The warfare with Java and Makassar put considerable stress on the system. The sources speak of armies of up to 20,000 men. Although probably vastly exaggerated, this figure indicates burdensome efforts by the royal centre to maintain the external power balance.³⁹ The stress that warfare put on local societies was further exacerbated by the troublesome climate fluctuations in the region during part of the seventeenth century, part of a global trend with severe economic and long-lasting political consequences.⁴⁰

Dutch and Balinese sources agree that internal fighting broke out on the island in 1651. A list of dates mentions “*rundah nagara Bangsul*”, the collapse of the kingdom of Bali, in that year.⁴¹ The indigenous date lists laconically mention numerous intra-island clashes during the second half of the seventeenth century. European sources confirm that new kingdoms arose in the 1660s: Badung in the commercially vital southernmost part of Bali, and Buleleng on the north coast, while a usurper tried to maintain a position in Gelgel. The erosion of central authority

38. H. T. Colenbrander & W.Ph. Coolhaas (eds), *Jan Pieterszoon Coen bescheiden omtrent zijn bedrijf in Indië* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1919-1953): VII-1, 414–15.

39. Lintgensz, “Bali 1597”, 211; Warna, et al. (eds), *Babad Dalem. Teks dan Terjemahan*, 93, 104. The figure 20,000 for some of the campaigns interestingly occurs in both Balinese and VOC sources but nevertheless seems to be too high considering the population figures at the time. In a Burmese context, Michael Charney has argued that the apparently inflated military statistics found in the chronicles should be regarded as reflecting contemporary concerns of those in power; the statistics would have supported or denigrated political figures and regimes according to the view of the chronicler. Michael W. Charney, “A Reassessment of Hyperbolic Military Statistics in Some Early Modern Burmese Texts”, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 46.2 (2003): 211.

40. Lieberman, *Strange Parallels*, 2.864.

41. Hans Hägerdal, “From Batuparang to Ayudhya”, 90.

therefore came before the real political decline of Mataram (1670s) and Makassar (1667–69), at a time when these entities could still pose a threat. As was common in insular Southeast Asia, shared ethnicity was insufficient to bring about lasting political unity, even in the face of external pressure.⁴² While the heir to Gelgel's political position, Klungkung, still had a position of island-wide precedence after 1686, this had limited consequences for the continuous state of internal warfare. We are reminded of other ritually laden kingships in the Archipelago, such as Pagaruyung on Sumatra and Sonba'i on Timor, which were "kingdoms of words" without substantial means to wield power.

Whatever the immediate reasons for the break-up after 1651, the expanding influence of the VOC in the Archipelago decreased the external threats to Bali, and thence possibly the incentives to regain political unity. The political division on Bali was to be permanent and nine domains were formed in the period up to c. 1800. These were Klungkung, Buleleng, Badung, Sukawati/Gianyar, Tabanan, Tamanbali/Bangli, Mengwi, Karangasem, and Jembrana.⁴³ They were all governed by Ksatria⁴⁴ clans that claimed descent from the Gelgel kings or their ministers and tried to emulate old Javanese-Balinese models of kingship. The status of the kingdoms was unstable; one domain might be attacked and subjugated by a neighbour, later to regain its autonomy or be taken over by a third domain. The almost perennial state of warfare generated extensive slaving. Substantial numbers of slaves were exported outside Bali even before 1651 but humans now became a major trading commodity, not least bolstering commercial relations between Bali and the Dutch possessions on Java. An increasing number of slaves lived and worked in the Javanese coastal towns in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, being used for household duties and various other tasks.⁴⁵ It is estimated that a thou-

42. David Henley, *Jealousy and Justice: The Indigenous Roots of Colonial Rule in Northern Sulawesi* (Amsterdam: VU Uitgeverij, 2002).

43. Sukawati waned as an autonomous realm towards the end of the eighteenth century and was replaced by Gianyar; in a similar way, Tamanbali was replaced by Bangli around 1800.

44. Some of them were later counted as Wesia, cf. Bloemen Waanders, "Aanteekeningen Omtrent de Zeden en Gebruiken der Balinezen, Inzonderheid die van Boeleleng", 107.

45. Luc Nagtegaal, *Riding the Dutch Tiger: The Dutch East Indies Company and the Northeast Coast of Java, 1680–1743* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1996): 95.

sand slaves were exported each year up to the early nineteenth century, though not all of them were war captives. It is likely that the profitability of slaving was one of the factors generating warfare.⁴⁶

The period of fragmentation meant instability but not necessarily political decline. In fact the late seventeenth and much of the eighteenth centuries witnessed a renewed phase of territorial expansion outside Bali, carried out by a few micro-kingdoms. Balambangan in East Java enjoyed a respite as an autonomous kingdom from the 1640s to the 1690s when its Central Javanese and Balinese neighbours were occupied with other matters. However, in 1692 an intervention from Badung was documented, and in 1697 a Buleleng invasion brought Balambangan under permanent vassalage. The Mengwi Kingdom in South Bali took over the suzerainty over Balambangan from Buleleng in 1711. There were ambitions even further to the west: in 1730, the kings of Mengwi and Klungkung visited the ritually significant Mount Sumeru near Malang, apparently strengthening atavistic ties to the old Majapahit Empire.⁴⁷ The shifting phases of overlordship left governance of Balambangan largely autonomous, and there is nothing to suggest widespread Balinese immigration there.

The situation was completely different in the east where Karangasem was the principal micro-state. Being situated far from the rice-producing South Bali, it was a mountainous domain that increased its area by a complicated series of petty wars and agreements with local lords and villages. Lombok is situated less than 40 kilometres from the eastern tip of Karangasem and is easily reached by minor crafts. Similar to Balambangan, Lombok was left to its own devices after the decline of a strong regional power, in this case Makassar. After the defeat of Makassar in 1667, a treaty regulating VOC–Makassar relations was signed in Bungaya and included clauses on the position of the Makassarese dependencies. Lombok was not mentioned in the treaty text. Judging from indigenous accounts, Lombok consisted of several minor kingdoms of which Selaparang in East Lombok was the dominating. The same family ruled Selaparang and the Sumbawa Sultanate (West Sumbawa).

46. Schulte Nordholt, *The Spell of Power*, 41.

47. Helen Creese, "Sri Surawirya, Dewa Agung of Klungkung (c. 1722–1736): The Historical Context for Dating the Kakawin Parthayana", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 147 (1991): 402–19.

However, Sumbawa was not politically strong and had the most tenuous relations with its new overlord, the VOC.⁴⁸

Under these circumstances, a wave of Balinese incursions in Lombok commenced in 1676, apparently leading to the steady presence of Karangasem settlements in the western parts of the fertile central corridor of the island. There exists a plethora of later Balinese and Sasak texts that seek a rationale for the Balinese success. Karangasem superiority is here seen as supernaturally fated – hardly surprising considering local perceptions of the past. At the same time the stories emphasize how inner dissent in the Selaparang Kingdom causes one faction to invite the Balinese. Although the Sasak elite belonged to a localized brand of Islam, they had no qualms of contacting a foreign Hindu raja to further their ends. VOC sources indicate that Karangasem invaded East Lombok in 1692. Selaparang was subjugated and assistance from Sumbawa was beaten back. The period up to about 1748 saw repeated Sasak uprisings and attempts by Sumbawa and Makassarese adventurers to regain control over Lombok. Karangasem, apparently allied with some of the Sasaks, defeated all of these attempts. The ambitions of Karangasem did not stop there, for in the 1750s and 1760s a number of attempts were made on Sumbawa itself.⁴⁹

The Balinese wars of expansion in the east exhibit both similarities and differences with those in the west. In both cases they occurred in areas with Indianized (and partly Islamized) but weak polities, and were underpinned by local infighting. Their success was ultimately contingent on the weakening of larger powers in the neighbourhood, in both cases kept in check by VOC politics. Balinese intervention in the west (as far as known) commenced twelve years after the devastating Trunajaya Rebellion in Mataram, while warfare in the east started seven years after the defeat of Makassar in 1667–69. However, while the Balambangan kingship was left intact, this was not the case in Lombok. Selaparang disappeared after a rebellion in 1748, while a few minor princedoms survived until the nineteenth century. Six Balinese kingdoms, headed by branches of the Karangasem Dynasty (Singhasari, Mataram, Pagesangan-Tanjung Karang, Pagutan, Kediri, Sengkongo), occupied fertile parts of West Lombok. *Pambencangah Dane Poleng*, a family chronicle that makes a relatively trustworthy impression, recounts in some detail how

48. Hägerdal, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 15–23, 51.

49. Ibid., 43–45, 53–54, 63–64, 115–17, 155–56.

Balinese immigrants of the second generation, thus around 1700, created a system of canals that could support an intensive rice-producing society. Especially interesting is that migration streams went in both directions.⁵⁰ Numbers of Muslim Sasaks were forcibly brought over to Karangasem and settled in villages around the court of the raja where they had a protective function.⁵¹ Extant tradition suggests that this took place in the first half of the eighteenth century. There were therefore integrative aspects in the process of conquest, and this is underlined by a certain ethnic flexibility.

Despite the Balinese caste system and formal Muslim restrictions, intermarriage seems to have taken place among the highest aristocracies (although it was covered up in later historiography). Sasaks of princely blood occasionally served as military commanders and even referred to themselves as “Balinese” in their communication with the Dutch.⁵² The obvious religious differences between Balinese and Sasaks were probably less important than pre-Islamic concepts of power and kingship. At the same time, there were clearly disruptive effects of the conquest. Taxation was heavily felt from the start, and rebellions were common.⁵³ Islamic sentiment was used by rebels who applied for help from such diverse places as Banten, Makassar and Sumbawa. Local traditions speak of demographic disruption with abandonment of villages and resettlement.⁵⁴ Still, Karangasem rule on Lombok managed to last for more than two centuries, and was only abrogated by the full military power of the colonial state in 1894.

Halted expansion and subsequent contraction

The second phase of expansion lasted less than a century. The containment of Balinese activity was due to the dispositions of the VOC. Since the inception of Balinese–Dutch contacts in 1597, political relations were usually good. The Company had a vital interest in acquiring slaves

50. Pambencangah Dane Poleng, Coll. V.E. Korn, Or. 435: 285, KITLV Archive.

51. Anak Agung Gde Putra Agung, *Peralihan sistem birokrasi dari tradisional ke kolonial* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2001): 104–05

52. Bijvanck, “Onze Betrekkingen tot Lombok”, 137.

53. NA, VOC 1783, Letter from the King of Banten to Batavia, 1710, fols. 137–38; Hägerdal, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 124–25.

54. Hägerdal, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 119–21.

from the island, but otherwise little to attend there, while Balinese petty rajas often sought the friendship of the Dutch to further their political ends and involve the Company in internal warfare, although with limited success. Nevertheless, various political factors made the Dutch wary about Balinese activities in East Java, Lombok and beyond. There is an interesting contemporaneity in this, since VOC-related conflicts in the west and the east both occurred in the 1760s. Some of the events of this time apply to local issues, while other aspects have global connotations.

In the west, the suzerainty of Mengwi over Balambangan was challenged when the current East Javanese *raja* fell out with his Balinese overlord and sought Dutch assistance. The Mengwi ruler reacted swiftly, strengthened his direct authority over Balambangan, and had the vassal *raja* murdered in 1766. Such event would not normally have moved the VOC to action, since easternmost Java was not economically or commercially vital to it. However, the Seven Years' War recently had been concluded in Europe, and left the maritime position of Britain greatly strengthened. British or British-affiliated trading vessels began to appear in areas in the East Indies that were within or close to the VOC sphere of interest. These considerations contributed to the VOC's decision to intervene in Balambangan in 1767. While the VOC was not at the height of its efficacy, the Dutch and auxiliary troops dispatched from Java's north coast were more than a match for the Balinese commanders. Still, no major battles were fought at this stage, and the course of events shows the fragility of Mengwi's position. Not only were many hundreds of Balinese killed by the local East Javanese, but the Balinese elite in the Mengwi satellites Jembrana in westernmost Bali and Badung in the south also had no qualms in approaching the VOC, offering 4,000 to 5,000 men who would attack their overlords in the back.⁵⁵ The Dutch subjugation of Balambangan turned out to be an outdrawn affair that lasted until 1777 and led to widespread depopulation and, ironically, the introduction of Islam as the creed of the majority. The *raja* of Mengwi did not persist in his claims of the territory since he and the rajas of Badung and Klungkung sent letters in 1768–69 in which they

55. NA, VOC 3186, Secret letters from Semarang to Batavia, 1766, fols. 447, 460; see also Sri Margana, "The Formation of a New Frontier: The Conquest of Java's Oosthoek by the Dutch in 1768", in Nigel Worden (ed.), *Contingent Lives: Social Identity and Material Culture in the VOC World* (Rondebosch: Historical Studies Department, University of Cape Town, 2007).

sought the friendship of the Company.⁵⁶ A late and unrelated attempt on Balambangan was undertaken by the northern kingdom of Buleleng in 1814, during the British interregnum in Java, but was resolutely halted by sepoy troops.⁵⁷

Karangasem expansion towards the east took place through most of the eighteenth century. After the disappearance of the Selaparang Kingdom in East Lombok about 1748, Balinese war bands began to traverse the Alas Strait to Sumbawa in the 1750s. One of the reasons for the raids was apparently revenge on Sumbawan help to Sasak rebels, but there were also explicit plans to subjugate territory. The sultanate in West Sumbawa (Sumbawa Proper) had few resources to spend, and the west coast of the island consisted of largely autonomous domains (Alas, Taliwang, Setelok, Seran). The Balinese incursion was a rash step since the Sultan of Sumbawa had a contract with the VOC, albeit of a rather tenuous nature. The warfare on Sumbawa was at its height in 1763–66 and consisted of plundering and sieges that did not achieve lasting results. The Balinese and Sasak war chiefs under Karangasem attempted to win ground by shifting alliances, which included both Sumbawans and the Dutch. This is an intricate story that cannot be recounted here. However, it falls into the line of improvised and flexible strategy that marks earlier Karangasem penetration in East Bali and Lombok. It also bears witness of growing dissent within the Karangasem ranks. Some war chiefs of Sasak or mixed ethnicity offered to switch sides to the VOC and even expel the might of Karangasem from Lombok. Certain Company officials eagerly endorsed this as part of the strategy to keep the British away from these islands.⁵⁸ Immediately after the Sumbawan adventure, in 1766, a Dutch report alleged that there were advanced plans for a Karangasem invasion of Balambangan in the near future, and even hinted at possibilities of British assistance to the Balinese, although this is not really substantiated by British documents. This added to the apprehension of the Company.⁵⁹ Since VOC power was on the wane

56. NA, VOC 3277, Report from Semarang to Batavia, 1769, fols. 53–56.

57. C. Lekkerkerker, "Bali 1800–1814", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 82 (1926): 337–38.

58. Bijvanck, "Onze Betrekkingen tot Lombok", 149–57

59. NA, VOC 3186, Secret letters from Semarang to Batavia, 1766, fols. 394, 447. Thus the Karangasem designs on Blambangan occurred right after its abortive campaign

nothing came out of the Lombok plans in the end, but the affair demonstrates the limits of a rather loosely-structured Indonesian micro-state with long lines of communication. It was not possible to keep a close check on the satellites, or ensure their loyalty. While elite troops with muskets are mentioned in Karangasem,⁶⁰ they were probably too few for continuous supervision of outlying dependencies, and there were few good harbours in East Bali, hence limited shipping capabilities. Apart from a brief intervention in West Sumbawa in 1789, which was halted by the efforts of the Dompu Sultanate in East Sumbawa, the Balinese henceforth kept away from Sumbawa.⁶¹

Unlike Mengwi, Karangasem was able to hold on to its established possessions. However, this was accomplished through a shift of gravity that in turn became a source of internal conflict. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the senior *raja* of Karangasem moved his seat to Singhasari in West Lombok. His relations to his younger brother and co-ruler, who remained on Bali, were hostile. A relation from 1805 mentions Lombok as being divided between five Balinese and two minor Sasak domains, with the east coast coming under the lord of Mataram, a close relative of the main *raja*.⁶² In the following year, a son of the main Lombok *raja* forced his way to the throne of Karangasem on Bali. Issues of surveillance thus favoured a move of the political centre west of the Lombok Strait across the water, to the sizeable Balinese community on Lombok. The following three decades witnessed an intense state of rivalry between factions within the Karangasem complex.⁶³

There are at least three dimensions of this. First, the remaining Sasak domains of Sakra and Praya were eliminated by the troops of Balinese *rajas* in 1826 and 1843, respectively. Scattered European reports of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries mention deep Sasak animosity towards the Balinese, for religious and political reasons. These remarks clearly over-simplify the complex Balinese–Sasak relations but indicate that Balinese governance had still not integrated Sasak political

in Sumbawa, suggesting a swift shift in allocating resources, and thus a degree of strategical planning.

60. Bijvanck, “Onze Betrekkingen tot Lombok”, 330.

61. Hägerdal, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 157.

62. Lekkerkerker, “Bali 1800–1814”, 334–36.

63. Vickers, “The Desiring Prince”, 337

structures, at least in parts of Lombok. Second, violent competition among the Balinese *rajas* led to one petty domain swallowing up the other. In this predatory process Sengkongo fell in 1803, Kadiri in 1805, Pagesangan in 1836, Pagutan in 1838, and Singhasari in 1839. There remained Mataram, whose *rajas* had been placed on Lombok in about 1767. They would govern entire Lombok until their demise at the hands of the Dutch colonial state in 1894.⁶⁴ Third, it was a matter of Karangasem on Bali against Karangasem on Lombok. A Lombok prince governed the Balinese homeland in 1806–28 before being expelled. A few decades later the Raja of Lombok supported the Dutch during their third expedition against the Balinese kingdoms in 1849, and was able to kill his mainland cousins and place Karangasem under the viceroys from his close family. The Balinese Lombok *rajas* of the period from 1838 to 1894 attempted a forced integration of their realm, as can be seen from numerous regulations issued by the court, detailing the lives of the subjects.⁶⁵

The permanence of infighting

The imposition of Dutch direct rule in easternmost Java made an effective end to the ambitions of political expansion towards the west. The situation in the east was more complicated, but the strengthening of a Lombok state in the nineteenth century anyway rendered it off-limits for the *rajas* on the Balinese home island. The question is, what effects this may have had for the political stability, or lack thereof, on Bali. Could the narrowing political arena have increased military competition? First, it should be noted that there was nothing like “stability” during the entire period from 1651 to 1908. We have *babad* texts dealing with the nine kingdoms, and with various prominent lineages and personalities. They confirm what is also known from a variety of Dutch reports, namely that warfare was a perennial part of the Balinese reality. Time and again we find the *rajas* as war leaders, either acting against each other or attacking minor lords or villages. From that point of view it is hazardous to speak of trends in the intensity of violence in the eighteenth and nineteenth cen-

64. Hägerdal, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 149–50, 157–58.

65. F. A. Liefdrinck, *De Landsverordeningen der Balische vorsten van Lombok*, Vols I–II (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1915).

turies. As common in Southeast Asian societies, it was difficult to draw a clear line between war and peace since violence tended to be endemic.⁶⁶

At the same time, one may discern changes in the style of kingship from the Gelgel period to the age of division, with consequences for the conduct of warfare. The later chronicles, in particular the *Babad Dalem*, depict the early kings as embodiments of Hindu-Javanese virtue. They are *cakravartin*, universal rulers who keep society in place by performing the right ritual practices, and endowed with divinity and *kasaktian* (supernatural power) in their persons.⁶⁷ Personally they do not stand out as warriors, although their *kasaktian* sometimes helps defeat the enemies. Rather, they delegate military tasks to the grandees of the kingdom.⁶⁸ While this is a propagandistic image composed in the eighteenth century and later, the VOC documents do not gainsay the idea of an immobile ruler before 1651. As pointed out by Jean-François Guernonprez,⁶⁹ *babad* texts such as the *Babad Buleleng*, detailing post-Gelgel events, depict a more active type of kingship where the personal military prowess plays a role: the king employs violence conforming to implicit laws which grant social harmony and prosperity in the domain.⁷⁰ Historical rajas like Anglurah Ketut Karangasem (c. 1670s), Gusti Pañji Sakti of Buleleng (c. 1660–97), and Gusti Agung Sakti of Mengwi (c. 1690–1722) are heroic figures who lead armies in the field and fight in person, supported by their possession of supernatural powers.⁷¹ Dutch sources confirm the active role of some rajas, especially in the early stages

66. Charney, *Southeast Asian Warfare*, 17.

67. It is instructive here to refer to what Oliver Wolters (1999) calls soul stuff. In several cultures of Southeast Asia, “beliefs associated with an individual’s spiritual quality rather than with institutional props seem to be responsible for success”. O. W. Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives* (New York: SEAP. Singapore: ISEAS, 1999): 95.

68. Warno, et al. (eds), *Babad Dalem. Teks dan Terjemahan*. These features are found at various places in the chronicle.

69. Jean-François Guernonprez, “Rois divins et rois guerriers: Image de la royauté à Bali”, *L’Homme* 25.95 (1985): 44.

70. More exactly, Guernonprez hypothesizes a process of de-indianization and desacralization of kingship in Balinese history, the main nodes of which are the fall of the indigenous Hindu dynasty in the fourteenth century, and the split-up in minor kingdoms in the seventeenth century. *Ibid.*, 59.

71. The exploits of Anglurah Ketut Karangasem are described in *Babat Lombok Banjar Getas*, translated in Hägerdal, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 143–51. Gusti Pañji Sakti and Gusti Agung Sakti are the main characters in *Babad Buleleng* (Worsley,

of state formation. Kingdoms were built up and sometimes destroyed in short time, demanding an active and movable leader. This type of kingship found an outlet for external aggression outside Bali for more than a century after 1651; indeed it seems likely that it was fuelled by the possibilities of expansion beyond the shores of Bali. However, these possibilities ceased or were increasingly complicated after the 1760s without replacing the ideology underpinning belligerent kingship. It therefore seems that the multi-state system in the late pre-colonial era was not able to stabilize and find a balance on its own accord.

Moreover, economic factors may have increased the competitive tendencies. The elite themselves readily acknowledged the predatory aspects of war: it was a matter of attacking the weakest neighbours and acquire as many prisoners as possible to be sold as slaves.⁷² For a long time, the slave trade was a major source of income for the various *rajas*, but the Dutch authorities prohibited it in 1818, although in the event the prohibition was grossly violated in the Indies for many years. This may eventually have removed a rationale for raiding, and furthermore coincided with agricultural expansion and new opportunities for trade. However, according to Henk Schulte Nordholt,⁷³ this is precisely what underpinned renewed attempts by the *rajas* to gain control over irrigation works that in turn ushered in warfare.⁷⁴ To this should be added the possibilities that offered themselves when firearms were acquired. The rise of Singapore after 1819 had repercussions on Bali and Lombok where in particular Bandung and Ampenan became entrepôts that received foreign goods, arms included. Later in the same century the increasingly sophisticated weaponry was pointed out by the Dutch medical doctor Julius Jacobs, who visited Bali and Lombok in 1881; he asserted that the Balinese raja of Lombok had a large standing army, uniformly clad and armed with Snider and Minié rifles, and that 1,000

Babad Buleleng) and *Babad Mengwi* (I Wajan Simpen, *Babad Mengwi* [Denpasar: Balimas, 1958]). All three *babad* emphasize the supernatural qualities of the *rajas*.

72. Schulte Nordholt, *The Spell of Power*, 41.

73. *Ibid.*, 99.

74. This is exceedingly difficult to prove since we simply do not know much of the mindset of the regional elites, but the 1820s saw the temporary end of Mengwi, and violent power struggles among the related elite in Buleleng and Karangasem. Vickers, "The Desiring Prince", 335–39; Schulte Nordholt, *The Spell of Power*, 108.

Beaumont rifles had recently been purchased from Singapore.⁷⁵ The Dutch military expeditions in 1846, 1848 and 1849 led to increasing colonial influence in Buleleng and Jembrana, but left the competitive South Balinese kingdoms fully autonomous while Karangasem was swallowed up by its twin kingdom in Lombok. With these three sizeable territories conquered by outsiders, the remaining six micro-states experienced increased competition and inner convulsions, accompanied by a sequence of natural calamities and epidemics.

As pointed out by Adrian Vickers,⁷⁶ the lack of complete Dutch success in 1849 may have given the micro-states a false sense of security, reinforced by the explicit Dutch policy to avoid direct intervention in local kingdoms unless absolutely necessary. Nor was the heir of Gelgel, the Dewa Agung of Klungkung, a potential centre of political integration. While he maintained a position of precedence, his attempts to transform nominal power into real during the nineteenth century only worsened the extremely volatile situation on Bali. His role in the destruction of the Gianyar and Mengwi kingdoms in 1885 and 1891 evoked bitterness from several elite lineages.⁷⁷ The unstable situation served hawkish Dutch politicians as a rationale for military intervention when the traditional non-intervention policy was abandoned in the wake of the Aceh War around 1900. Thus the scene was set for the Dutch expeditions in 1906 and 1908 that ushered in the renowned suicide attacks (*puputan*) and destroyed the kingdoms of Badung, Tabanan and Klungkung, bringing the island under direct colonial rule.⁷⁸

Conclusion

The present chapter has attempted to point out phases of expansion and contraction in Balinese military activity, and their connection to the degree of internal (in)stability. Although Bali was far from the only non-Muslim domain in late pre-colonial Indonesia, it was unique in conducting an expansive mode of warfare, gaining suzerainty over, or

75. Julius Jacobs, *Eenigen tijd onder de Baliërs* (Batavia: G. Kolff & Co., 1883): 153.

76. Vickers, "The Desiring Prince", 73–74.

77. Schulte Nordholt, *The Spell of Power*: 175–197; Wiener, *Visible and Invisible Realms*, 241–48.

78. There is no space in this brief essay to delve into the ideology underpinning the performance of *puputan*; see in particular Wiener, *Visible and Invisible Realms*.

even colonizing, formally Muslim areas in the process. In that respect it resembles some maritime-oriented polities elsewhere in the Archipelago. This is all the more interesting because the level of military sophistication was initially not particularly high. Campaigns were conducted with *kris*, lances, blowpipes and some firearms, with rudimentary strategic and tactical devices. Furthermore there was little indigenous shipping to support the movement of troops – in fact this is a major difference compared with other expansive island Southeast Asian realms of the pre-modern period. Clearly, the degree of political cohesion of Gelgel and some of its successor states must be taken into account, as well as the larger geopolitical situation of eastern Java and the islands to the east. Expansion tended to take place before and after the heyday of the Mataram and Makassar empires (that is, before c. 1600 and after the 1660s/1670s). Gelgel and later Mengwi (supported by Gelgel's heir Klungkung), with an economic base in the South Balinese sawah economy, gained success in obtaining a loose suzerainty over overseas territories, and so did Buleleng with its long northern coastline and access to archipelagic trading routes.⁷⁹

More surprising are the wide military ambitions of the relatively marginal Karangasem; early successes in the fertile areas of West Lombok in the 1670s in combination with efficacious leadership were likely important in this case.⁸⁰ Expansion, at least such that departed from Bali itself, broke off in simultaneously in the western and eastern directions in the 1760s. This was due to European intervention, which for the first time involved Balinese polities in direct military confrontation with the Dutch. It quickly became evident that Balinese troops could not stand up against European military organization, or the political network that allowed the VOC to use other "Indonesian" groups for its enterprises. In contrast Balinese campaigns were usually not sustained; from what we know they consisted in brief raids, assaults and sieges, although the case of Karangasem expansion possibly suggests a degree of overall strategy.⁸¹ Still, global technological advances did not fail to make their mark. By the nineteenth century, the lively trade with European and Asian merchants

79. H. J. de Graaf, "Gusti Pandji Sakti, vorst van Buleleng": 59–82; Schulte Nordholt, *The Spell of Power*.

80. Hägerdal, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 132–33.

81. NA, VOC 3137, letter from the Resident of Bima to the Governor of Makassar, 23 October 1765, fol. 165; Bijvanck, "Onze Betrekkingen tot Lombok", 150.

enabled a degree of military sophistication in the form of shotguns, cannon, and fortifications. The elite even took interest in sending smiths with diplomatic delegations who acquired skills in manufacturing rifles in Javanese workshops.⁸²

As pointed out above, the end of expansion was followed by endemic internal unrest that appears to have intensified after the early nineteenth century, perhaps underpinned by the use of modern weaponry.⁸³ This warrants a few comments. The nature of the vertical bonds between the local agrarian units and the royal power centres is a hotly debated topic that cannot be solved in the context of this study. While anthropologists since Geertz have tended to see the villages and irrigation systems as relatively autonomous and maintained by local ritualized networks, some recent research suggests a degree of royal control over manpower and water.⁸⁴ Be that as it may, the available materials suggest a highly decentralized socio-economic system, as can indeed be expected in a pre-modern island Southeast Asian context. Thus the capabilities of the *rajas* were relatively unstable and depended on their ability to co-opt the various *mañca* (local lords) and village leaders. This localism made hegemonic attempts difficult to sustain. The contest state, the warring-type of kingship prevalent in the post-1651 period, depended on the

82. Helen Creese, *Bali in the Early Nineteenth Century: the Ethnographic Accounts of Pierre DuBois* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016): 32. Bijvanck, “Onze Betrekkingen tot Lombok”, 330, notes that a VOC diplomat who visited Karangasem in 1775 was impressed by the royal elite troops armed with muskets and cannon, suggesting a process of military sophistication even before 1600.

83. Interestingly, the perceived military potential of Balinese people was sufficient for the Dutch to systematically recruit soldiers to serve in the Java War (1825–1830), which was done with support from the local Balinese *rajas*. See Creese, *Bali in the Early Nineteenth Century*.

84. The hypothesis of a Balinese “theatre state” envisioned by Clifford Geertz in *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth Century Bali* has served as a point of departure for several attempts to conceptualize and historically explain the relations between royal center, local lords, and commoners in the villages. See the essay by Brigitte Hauser-Schaublin, “The Precolonial Balinese State Reconsidered: A Critical Evaluation of Theory Construction on the Relationship between Irrigation, the State, and Ritual”, *Current Anthropology* 44.2 (2003), and the sometimes fiery rejoinders in the same issue. A point similar to that of Hauser-Schaublin has been made by Henk Schulte Nordholt, “Dams and Dynasty, and the Colonial Transformation of Balinese Irrigation Management”, *Human Ecology* 39 (2011), who argues that large scale irrigation in pre-colonial times depended on the dynastic centre to a degree and was not sustained merely by autonomous local organization.

qualities of those in power. As pointed out by Henk Schulte Nordholt (1996), a *raja* in the pre-colonial period did not inherit his power automatically but had to renew it.⁸⁵ That a few attempts to achieve hegemony ended in failure is therefore far from astonishing. The Mengwi–Klungkung alliance in about the 1710s–1770s dominated large parts of Bali and Balambangan but the Dutch attack in 1767 demonstrated the extreme vulnerability of the project. Karangasem, at the height of its power, entertained plans to become overlord of all of Bali with Dutch assistance in 1805 but quickly backed off when the ruling elite realized the outcry from the other rulers that such enterprise would bring with it.⁸⁶ Klungkung's hand in the destruction of Gianyar and Mengwi in the late nineteenth century merely led to increased warfare in South Bali. While there were binding symbols that encompassed Balinese society, such as the centrality of the Pura Besakih temple and the hierarchical concepts embodied in the *warna* (caste) system, these were insufficient to transform an awareness of cultural identity into political cohesion, or to stop the endless series of military clashes between or within the micro-states.

Finally it needs to be stressed once again that the unstable situation was not merely due to the inner workings of Balinese society, but was ultimately contingent on external influences. As apparent from this survey, the VOC, and later on, the Dutch colonial state had a large role in the various stages of Balinese external and internal warfare since the seventeenth century, through the political and economic developments they engendered in the archipelago. Unaware of this, Dutch colonial policy-makers who pursued their (in)famous Ethical Policy in the years around 1900 to the supposed benefit of the indigenous peoples, regarded the squabbling petty rajas as anachronisms inevitably bound for elimination under the colonial Juggernaut.⁸⁷

85. Schulte Nordholt, *The Spell of Power*, 4, 63, 149.

86. Lekkerkerker, "Bali 1800–1814", 319; A Dutch evaluation of the plans of the Karangasem ruler is found in the document "Carang Assam", Coll. Van Alphen en Engelhard, 19B, No. 148, National Archives, The Hague.

87. For the ethical policy and the Bali expeditions in 1906–08, see van den Doel, *Zo ver de wereld strekt*, 127–28, 150–61. It should be noted that the expeditions were not directly triggered by Balinese internecine wars.

Armed Rural Folk

Elements of Pre-colonial Warfare in the Artistic Representations and Written Accounts of the Pacification Campaign (1886–1889) in Burma

Michael W. Charney

Introduction

Although there are still occasional references to the primacy of the village in Southeast Asian life,¹ attributing too much importance to the village as the basic unit of pre-colonial life in the region is not just unpopular, it is becoming seen as at best anachronistic and at worst misleading. This change has been underway for some time. In the late 1970s, Samuel Popkin highlighted the agency of the individual as opposed to the village community and as the moral economy approach has steadily lost currency since, the notion of the Southeast Asian village as an autonomous community has been increasingly viewed by scholars as a creation of colonial officials and scholars in an effort to legitimize a convenient administrative device for maintaining order and extracting taxes and labour.² Admittedly, Anthony Reid has made the case for in-

1. On more recent assertions that the village remains at the core of various Southeast Asian societies, see G. W. Fry, "Higher Education in Vietnam", in Yasushi Hirosata and Yuto Kitamura (eds), *The Political Economy of Educational Reforms and Capacity Development in Southeast Asia: Cases of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam* (New York: Springer, 2009): 240.
2. This point draws upon Jonathan Rigg's detailed discussion in idem, *More Than the Soil: Rural Change in Southeast Asia* (London: Routledge, 2014): 29–37, *passim*. Popkin's arguments were made in Samuel Popkin, *The Rational Peasant: the Political Economy of Rural Society in Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California

creased rates of urbanisation in early modern Southeast Asia during the period that he refers to as the “Age of Commerce” (an urbanisation that was reversed by the seventeenth-century crisis),³ but rural Southeast Asia remained the primary locus of the lives of most pre-colonial Southeast Asians. Regardless of whether we call them villages, settlements, centres, or something else (Rigg, for example, refers to rural settlements perhaps because this eschews the necessary implication of an equation with “community”) and whether they were insulated from the outside world or well integrated into the larger economy, rural settlements of one sort or another dominated local life across the landscape, which is well documented not just from the European sources of the pre-colonial and early colonial eras, but also indigenous administrative records, royal edicts, revenue inquests, and inscriptions going back to the classical period in various parts of the region. In other words, although there is no scholarly consensus on the historical nature of organized rural life in mainland Southeast Asia, it is broadly accepted that most Southeast Asians were located – and most of their everyday life was spent – in rural areas. On the other hand, attention is rarely focused on conflict among rural folk in the primary or secondary accounts of pre-colonial warfare in lowland areas, the *plaines* or the *non-massif*,⁴ on the mainland. The

Press, 1979); the best-known case made for the moral economy approach regarding peasant behaviour in the Southeast Asian village is James C. Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976).

3. Reid’s arguments, made in various articles, were most fully elaborated in Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce*.
4. Some scholars of highland or upland Southeast Asia have recently modelled them for various purposes as a single zone referred to variously as the Southeast Asian Massif (Michaud) and Zomia (van Schendel; Scott). See Jean Michaud, “Economic Transformation in a Hmong Village of Thailand”, *Human Organization* 56.2 (1997): 222–232; Willem van Schendel, “Geographies of Knowing, Geographies of Ignorance: Jumping Scale in Southeast Asia”, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 20.6 (2002): 647–668; Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*, 2009. There is an inconsistency in how the uplands are distinguished from the lowlands and some scholarship finds upland–lowland divisions in the archipelago as well. For a critique of some of this literature, see Mandy Sadan, “Review of James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: an Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*”, *Reviews in History* <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/903> (date accessed 5 June 2016). The present article, however, does not seek to reaffirm the lowland–highland bifurcation of the region, but instead to question the relevance of a distinction that clearly populates the literature on precolonial warfare. Indeed,

“missing” lowland rural folk on the mainland in studies of pre-colonial warfare, except where the villagers are referenced as victims,⁵ is in sharp contrast to accounts of many of the smaller societies in the archipelago or the highland areas of the mainland where warfare is admitted to be more localized and of a smaller scale.⁶

For scholars of mainland Southeast Asian warfare, privileging state sources has meant that the many hundreds of local conflicts that happened in Burma and other mainland societies in any given year have been written off as mere problems between the court and local lords. Instead, it is suggested here that these were small-scale conflicts between rural communities over resources or for other reasons that were locally important. These local wars fought between various actors, sometimes between rural communities per se, and sometimes between the same communities more than once. One might reasonably ask that if the mainland and the archipelago were subject to the same centralizing, state-supporting interpretive frameworks, as mentioned above, why is pre-colonial warfare in the archipelago so much better understood as being characterized by local conflict. The answer appears to be the ubiquity of local Spanish, Portuguese, VOC, and Dutch Colonial Government

by showing that “lowland” warfare on the mainland was of a kind shared with the “uplands”, this article argues for directing scholarly attention to other factors that did indeed foster differences that were directly and indirectly responsible for manifesting historically discernible differences in warfare in the region before the colonial period.

5. Accounts of warfare in precolonial Burma make numerous references to the abuses of commonfolk by immoral rural gentry and bad officials who by doing so deserved the punishment (meted out by the royal court) they later received for their transgressions. See, for example, the abuses in 1810 connected to one *atwin-wun* whose men seized the wives of the commonfolk when the men had been sent off on a military expedition. They were forced to work in the fields and at night the *atwin-wun*'s men had sexual relations with the women treating them as if they were their wives. Of course, such evidence was useful in building a case against the *atwin-wun* for royal punishment. When the husbands, the common folk, returned, they complained, but when these complaints were dismissed, such people had no recourse, lacking agency of their own in this depiction of events. See Cyril Skinner (trans.), “The Interrogation of Zeya Suriya Kyaw: A Burmese Account of the Junk Ceylon (Phuket) Campaigns of 1809–1810”, *Journal of the Siam Society* 72.1 & 2 (1984): 70.
6. See, for example, the localized nature of conflict in parts of the archipelago as presented in the chapters by Kathryn Wellen, Hans Hägerdal, Ariel Lopez, and Gerrit Knaap in the present volume.

accounts and records throughout the archipelago, including areas they did not directly rule, with which the mainland courts had nothing similar in scale to compete until well into the late nineteenth century. The mainland court monopoly on perspective had other consequences as well. By being captured by the court perspective, historians of mainland warfare misunderstand the big campaigns as much as they do the local conflicts. Royal chronicles, in representing the history of warfare in ways that emphasized the role of the court, ignored altogether the role of everyday people, the common folk, who remain nameless in the official accounting of the fighting. Where battle portraits do include subalterns in the grand scheme of things, they remain in the background. Most of the royal soldiers who marched from Burma across the mountains to besiege Ayudhya in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, it will be suggested, were the same rural warriors involved in local conflicts, and when they went to Ayudhya, they fought in the same way that they had on their home landscape in Burma, in the vicinity of the rural settlement in which they spent most of their lives.

This chapter argues that local, rural warfare was the most basic component of pre-colonial Southeast Asian warfare although it might be termed differently in different parts of the region due to academic legacies.⁷ The answers to questions such as how a war was fought, with what means, and for what purpose can only be found in local sources and not in the reliance on state chronicles at face value. This requires more work on understanding the rural community. This requires setting aside the distinction made between lowland and highland societies and dropping the statecraft and religious frameworks that prevent us from understanding some relatively basic dynamics at work in shaping local, rural warfare that was common to the region. These include the impact of agricultural or monsoonal cycles (was war always waged at the same time and if not, was it waged in the same way at different times of the year), the regularity of conflict (how often were “wars” between commu-

7. Village warfare as used in the present chapter would arguably be very close to the “tribal warfare” presented by Janet Hoskins in her study of headhunting on Sumba in the Eastern Indonesian Archipelago. See Janet Hoskins, “On Losing and Getting A Head: Warfare, Exchange and Alliance in a Changing Sumba, 1888–1988” *American Ethnologist* 16.3 (August 1989): 420; Idem, “The Headhunter as Hero: Local Traditions and their Reinterpretation in National History”, *American Ethnologist* 14.4 (1987): 614.

nities), the purpose of the fighting (were they ritualized affairs or actual violence over control of resources), their relationship to the conduct of larger campaigns (were the large royal armies really something unique in the hands of the royal court or were they merely collections of bands of rural warriors), and what was gained from the fighting (we know what kings were after or what was said they were after in war – what do we learn about what rural folk in war took or did not take back home (and, even if they survived, did they choose to go back “home” at all?).

The present analysis uses both local written sources and artistic representations to shift the perspective of what warfare and armies looked like from that of the court and royal scribes to that of the rural peasant who became the average warrior for Burmese royal armies. In doing so, this chapter increases the magnification of the historian’s lens to more accurately consider how pre-colonial warfare in Burma looked on the ground to those who fought it. The chapter will choose a rather unconventional ground for historical analysis of pre-colonial warfare in the region by looking for evidence not in periods for which royal sources are plentiful (and territorial in their monopolization of perspective), but instead in a period during which the royal court did not have authority to enable it to regulate access to historical materials, either oral or written, because it had been toppled. This period occurred between the fall of the Burmese court in 1885 and the end of the 1880s, after which colonial rule was firmly established in Upper Burma. Although focusing on this particular period involves looking at local-level warfare extremely late in the pre-colonial period (the 1880s), additional supplementary attention will be paid to other inter-dynastic periods, however brief, during which royal authority in Burma had broken down, to broaden the applicability of the chapter’s argument.

Royal Court Depictions of Warfare

Before turning to the kinds of sources that can help the historian look around royal chronicles and court murals depicting warfare, however, it would be useful to consider why, as it is argued here, royal sources fail to say much beyond large campaigns (and arguably misrepresented these campaigns as well). The absence of rural folk in depictions of mainland warfare is due to our view having been artificially skewed by the legacy of pre-colonial court scribes. The latter left behind the most commonly

preserved examples of the kinds of pre-colonial indigenous sources conventionally favoured by historians, largely those written texts that were produced for royal courts and are easily accessible in both palm leaf and printed form in major libraries both within the region and in Europe. Royal scribes were not tasked in their own time with preserving an unbiased historical record for future generations of everyday, common folk. Court scribes worked within a literary as well as a moral economy that established the boundaries for their work. Their role was to make a record of whatever events and developments were considered important for the ruling family and its elites to remember, to record (and embellish) the accomplishments of their royal patrons, and to provide moral guidance to future kings. This meant that royal scribes generally screened out rural folk in their prose and focused attention on the prominence of the king and the court. They also read all warfare by a royal register.⁸ In this view, wars were fought almost always over religious transgressions, to acquire white elephants, or to restore universal harmony often after evidence of disunity in the religion in Theravada Buddhist societies or in the national “family” in Vietnam. Wars were also always waged by organized armies that were mobilized and often led into the field by the king himself, accompanied by his court. Similarly, anthropological work on the Eastern Indonesian Archipelago has demonstrated that written records there, even when written by local scholars, were subject to particular narrative and literary conventions that led them to transform warriors on the periphery in ways acceptable to “central power”, essentially “Javaniz[ing]” them and this process influenced their historical depiction by contemporary Indonesian historians.⁹

Southeast Asian chronicles and murals produced for the royal court were framed by religious and political paradigms that required a strong, centralizing ruler, the size, and strength of whose armies reflected moral superiority. These paradigms were derived originally from Indian classical religious thought such as those outlined by Sunait Chutintaranond. Especially important as a model for the role of the king in a war was the Sanskrit concept of the *cakravartin* or world conqueror (literally,

8. The author has made a related argument on the strategic use of hyperbole in royal sources from Burma in Michael W. Charney, “A Reassessment of Hyperbolic Military Statistics in Some Early Modern Burmese Texts”, 193–214.

9. Janet Hoskins, “The Headhunter as Hero”, 614.

the mover of the wheel).¹⁰ Court patronage and writing for the court meant that written records, including royal edicts and chronicles, were imprinted with the same view that warfare and the religion were inseparable. The view that the ruler maintained the universal order and the wellbeing of the kingdom and of the religion was played out in the symbolic laying-out of the palaces in mainland kingdoms and the naming of queens according to the cardinal points;¹¹ it was played out in court rituals and in the streets in royal processions, and this role was reaffirmed in the court-sponsored historical narratives of battles found in the royal chronicles. Warfare was waged mainly in ordered ways. Very neatly organized contingents who departed the royal city with great attention to pomp and ritual and commanders from royal and princely households engaged in brave combat against each other while the common warriors fought according to Indic tactology and formations found in the Sanskrit texts. Wars were held to be actions taken to punish the wicked, to bring disordered regions and kingdoms under the king's rule, and to restore harmony to the world. Order meant universal harmony that was a good thing for the kingdom. Conversely, disorder indicated disharmony and was something to be avoided.

Artistic illustrations have been a special obstacle to understanding war and conflict in the region because, for the classical period, Southeast Asia's cultural, religious, and political formative period, artistic representations in the form of bas-reliefs are often our only source. They have thus been used extensively in the study of warfare in the region for the classical and early modern periods. In these cases, however admittedly pioneering and important such work may have been, they have nevertheless lent themselves to state depictions of warfare.¹² Despite the formal purposes for which artistic or literary works depicting warfare

10. Sunait Chutintaranond, "Cakravartin: The Ideology of Traditional Warfare in Siam and Burma, 1548–1605", (Ph.D. dissertation: Cornell University, 1990). For the broader implications of the concept of *cakravartin* for rulership in Southeast Asia, see Stanley J. Tambiah, *World Conqueror and World Renouncer, A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand Against a Historical Background* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

11. For early treatment of this phenomenon, see Robert Heine-Geldern, *Conceptions of State and Kingship in Southeast Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press Southeast Asia Program, 1956).

12. Michel Jacq-Hergoualc'h, *The Armies of Angkor: Military Structure and Weaponry of the Khmers* (Bangkok: Orchid Press, 2007); Quaritch Wales, *Ancient South-East*

have been sponsored or directed, however, such sources are also often capable of providing insight into other, non-state aspects of warfare if we look closely enough and in the right way. There is also a great deal of artistic and photographic source material that has not yet been applied very usefully to the examination of warfare in pre-colonial Southeast Asia after the classical period. The problem in applying art to historical study is not so much in its methods, for historical methodology using art is very rich.¹³ Rather, conventional written and artistic sources have not been used to challenge the perspectives of each other in pre-colonial Southeast Asian historiography but rather for their complementarity, how they reinforce or clarify each other or how one fills in the gaps in our knowledge that the other kind of sources has left behind. This latter task, the development of a multi-relational understanding of source material as a complex of meanings has made significant headway in the history and anthropology of the region's post-war historical experience but has not been directed into earlier periods of the region's history.

Royal Soldiers as Armed Rural Folk

The emergence of standing armies was a late development in pre-colonial Southeast Asia. There were indeed early on royal bodyguard contingents but permanent or semi-permanent formations of a scale sufficient to wage the kingdom's major battles only come very late and, even then, they were always supplemented by peasant levies. In most early modern campaigns, rural agriculturalists and others were deployed on a temporary basis with their own weaponry using skills they already had. For the latter, Sanskrit stratagems, formations, and tactics, if they were ever used, would have more than likely fallen on deaf ears. In the last half of the eighteenth century, the Kingdom of Burma's military might was anchored around a core standing army of forty-one "great" (*su-gyi*) regiments who were professional, trained, and well-armed and

Asian Warfare; Richard Cooler, *British Romantic Views of the First Anglo-Burmese War, 1824–1826* (Ascona, Switzerland: Artibus Asiae Publishers, 1978).

13. The lineage of this literature can be traced back to the classic study by Lucy Maynard Salmon, *The Newspaper and the Historian* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1923).

included cavalry or mounted infantry as well.¹⁴ But no matter how large armies grew, the bulk of their numbers remained assemblies of armed rural folk. Moreover, armed rural folk brought to the enemy the kind of warfare that was waged at the local level whenever competition among rural settlements over resources led them to violence in rural Burma. The determining factor for this kind of warfare was a low population-to-land ratio, on the one hand, and a distant state centre challenged by weak transportation infrastructure, on the other.

It is thus necessary to reconsider the average pre-colonial warrior to see how warfare was fought. Most warriors were certainly rural folk first. When they were gathered for campaigns, they came as rural folk; in the royal army, which involved no system of centralized training for levies until late in the pre-colonial period, they remained rural folk; and when they went into the field they fought as rural folk. In some cases, they were merely picked up as levies en route to the battlefield.¹⁵ Everyday Southeast Asian experience with warfare was not with the warfare imaginary found in royal sources, but warfare as experienced first-hand or by their fathers and grandfathers in years past. When they went back to their homes they brought experience and booty that then entered local, rural mythologies and oral traditions that court scribes would have never been aware. And when state rule was weak, indirect, or absent on occasion, or when adverse intervention from the state through normal channels was expected, there was likely some attraction for inter-settlement fighting over local squabbles. And, by contrast to court depictions of warfare, when the state collapsed, and lowland rural folk came to the lead, some things – usually depicted as being common to highland warfare – came to the fore as well, such as the taking of heads.

14. On these regiments and their emergence see Michael W. Charney, *Powerful Learning: Buddhist Literati and the Throne in Burma's Last Dynasty, 1752–1885* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Centers for South and Southeast Asian Studies, 2006): 65–66.

15. In 1719, for example, the Arakanese ruler Sanda-wizaya-raza organized an army and marched against Burma, gathering war levies from Arakanese rural settlements along the way. Nga Mi, “Rakhine Razawin”, [palm-leaf manuscript, number 3465a] AMs, n.d. [circa 1840], Oriental and India Office Collection, British Library, London, 209a–209b; See also Aun-doun-pru, “Rakhine Raza-poun” [palm-leaf manuscript, number 6453D] AMs, 1833, Oriental and East India Office Collection, British Library. London, United Kingdom, 216a.

In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the political centre in Burma weakened on several occasions and during these periods of weakness, or interregnums in which complete political collapse had occurred, local conflicts became accessible for scrutiny. Not all of these periods yield much data on the actual fighting, although they provide extensive evidence of inter-settlement conflict in such cases of royal decline. In late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century Arakan, Burma's western littoral, the decline of the regional Mrauk-U court first saw endemic violence in the countryside with gangs of "country people" fighting each other so that no one was able to move freely about,¹⁶ followed by years of war between local competing "chieftains" (*bo-hmu* in Burmese) who fought each other in the rural areas for local supremacy.¹⁷ In the 1730s, again in Arakan, the headmen of twelve villages (*rwa*) joined together to defeat and unseat Nga Mei, the headman of Kantain village, whom they killed in the process. All of this was without the consent of the royal court, although the court subsequently went after these men and put them to death.¹⁸ Perhaps, we might see in these men the same kind of rural leader as Alaunghpaya (r. 1752–1760), before his rise to power, when he was merely the headman of a settlement and a rural strongman at the head of a body of his kith and kin. Nevertheless, although we find evidence of what appears to be local, rural conflict, we lack the clear descriptions by the participants themselves or direct observers that would make this a convincing argument for what was going on.

The several years' long "Pacification Campaign", as it was formerly known (pacification would later become the generic term for the activity today known as counter-insurgency) that followed the Third Anglo-Burmese War in November 1885 offers such a moment of historiographical clarity. The Third Anglo-Burmese War was itself a three-week campaign in which the British steamer fleet sailed upriver, the Burmese royal army essentially fled from Italian-built fortifications further upriver, and the king was arrested and deported to India and Burma was annexed

16. Nga Mi, "Rakhine Razawin", 61a.

17. See the general condition of the countryside due to these "rebellions" in Monk of Ra-naun-myin, "Kya Khwetsa", in Htoon Chan, "A Synopsis of Kya Khwetsa (Tiger Killing Poem)", *Journal of the Burma Research Society* 8 (1918): 153, 158.

18. Nga Mi, "Rakhine Razawin", 220b.

on 1 January 1886. That was not the end of the story. The British Indian Army soon found itself in the middle of a war against Burmans and smaller ethnic groups that went on for years, although the main fighting in low-land Burma was over with by 1889 or 1890. This conflict pinned down tens of thousands of troops and the fighting spread into Lower Burma as well. Aside from the Sudan, it is the major colonial war of note between the Zulu wars and the Boer War and sketches from it filled the pages of *The Graphic* and *The Illustrated London News* on a regular basis.

Understanding why rural folk fought against the British is not as easy a task as it may at first appear. The rise of nationalism in Southeast Asia from the late nineteenth century in the Philippines and the post-World War I period in much of the rest of Southeast Asia had made the prospects of colonial rule a natural enemy to indigenous populations, but these sentiments should not be read too far back in time. In fact, many of those who opposed British rule had also opposed the royal court and were indeed resistant to centralizing political agencies rather than demonstrating any awareness of national or proto-national loyalties. As Parimal Ghosh lamented in his *Brave Men of the Hills: Resistance and Rebellion in Burma, 1825–1932*, “we do not know the exact mechanism in operation to get the common people of Burma” to rebel and that there “had always been a hiatus between the locality and the centre”.¹⁹

The area of eastern central Burma where the British were building the Toungoo to Mandalay Extension of the railway from the beginning of the Third Anglo–Burmese War offers a good example of what triggered Burman rural folk to take up arms after that war concluded after three weeks in late November 1885. The colonial administration in British Burma to the south wanted a railway built so that they could jump start the economy and foster the growth of trade between Rangoon and China. The military backed the plan because the line could be used to bring troops and supplies to Mandalay faster. No unusual problems were envisaged. So, within a year of the outbreak of the campaign, 250,000 Burmese were taken out of rural settlements and put to work building a railway under the most horrendous conditions. The Toungoo–Mandalay Extension took two years and five months to build. Construction began in September 1886, opened to Pyinmana in May 1888, Yamethin in

19. Parimal Ghosh, *Brave Men of the Hills: Resistance and Rebellion in Burma, 1825–1932* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 2000): 22.

November 1888, and Mandalay on 1 March 1889.²⁰ This was very disruptive to the local economy; labour was procured by force through demands on local, rural headmen and an area that had not been a very troubled place when the kingdom collapsed in November 1885, became so within a year. Violence became endemic, but so too did property theft, including the theft of cattle from rural residents by “dacoits”.

Economic disruption that came with regime collapse and change clearly triggered the outbreak of violence in this part of Burma. Nevertheless, both colonial and indigenous historiographical treatments of this campaign attributed to rural fighters instead grander political goals. Rebels in the campaign are generally depicted as dacoits or princes in the European accounts and either as denizens of the court in pre-1920s Burmese accounts or as nationalists by Burmese historians of the late colonial period and after. Such interpretations also obscured the continuing legacy of rural warrior culture in Burma. Ranajit Guha has pointed to the conflation of banditry and resistance into one picture of endemic rural violence that necessitated colonial rule in India, while Nick Cheesman has argued that this was not so much confusion as strategic misrepresentation. In Cheesman’s view, colonial administrators made “deliberate misuse of the two concepts” of *bandit* and *rebel*, for by viewing armed rural malcontents as bandits the colonial government could legitimately ignore any grievances that would otherwise explain their resort to violence.²¹ Also at work was the fundamental imprint on Burma of “martial race” ideology imported from the subcontinent.²² The depiction of ethnic minorities (mainly the Chin, Kachin, Karen, and Shan) in highland Burma as members of martial races meant that viewing ethnic Burmans throughout rural Burma as examples

20. J. George Scott, *Burma: Handbook of Practical Information* (London: Alexander Moring, 1911): 311; Government of India, *Administration Report on the Railways in India for 1889–90* (London: HMSO, 1890): 25.

21. Nick Cheesman, *Opposing the Rule of Law: How Myanmar’s Courts Make Law and Order*, with a foreword by James Scott (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 194–195; Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects of the Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999): 106.

22. On “martial races” in British India, see Gavin Rand, “Martial Races and Imperial Subjects: Violence and Governance in Colonial India 1857–1914”, *European Review of History /Revue européenne d’Histoire* 13.1 (March 2006): 1–20. On “martial races” as an imperial concept, see Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race, and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857–1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010).

of traditional lowland warrior culture was hardly acceptable. This warrior heritage thus became an inconvenient truth in the emerging colonial context in Upper Burma as the British preferred the Burmans to be passive cultivators rather than warriors. Burman resistance to British rule had to be criminalized into dacoity for such reasons as well.

Just as damaging to the historical record has been the impact of nationalist reinterpretations of Burmese reactions to the British conquest. After World War I, the late 1880s “dacoits” were valorised for their resistance to British rule and, as mentioned above, transformed into Burmese nationalists. Since the British had put down the pre-colonial court, then these nationalists must have been fighting for that court or, in some indigenous historiography, were fighting on behalf of the nation.²³ This view was created by Burmese nationalists of the interwar period and was fanned by many of the same men during the Japanese occupation period through the republication of some of the court’s Sanskrit treatises on war with cover illustrations that clearly connected the Konbaung Dynasty’s royal soldiers with the Burma Defence Army soldiers.²⁴ Vernacular Burmese historiography during the period of military rule in the country accepted the models of Sanskrit treatises and the martial culture of the palace as the core sources for understanding what pre-colonial Burmese warfare was really like.²⁵ More recent literature in the West, sympathetic to the Burmese, has only reinforced this view.²⁶ As “nationalists” or “patriots”, the rebels have been looped in with more modern forms of insurgency. Other literature suggests that by pushing state space to incorporate rural settlements, the British broke the bond that had existed

23. For the latter take see Daw Nyi Nyi Myint, *Myanma Lut-lab-ye-kyo-ban-hmu Thamaing Vol. 1 (1885–1895)* (Rangoon: Rangoon University, 1988); Pantanaw Win Thein, “Burning Torch of Nationalism & Patriotism”, *Guardian Magazine* 16.5 (May 1969): 26–28; Anonymous, “Bo Ottama and His Freedom Fighters”, *Forward* 4.10 (1 January 1966): 6–11.

24. Letwe Thondara, *Senanga Vyuha Sit-Thamaing & Vyuha Cakki Pyo* (Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press, 1943).

25. See, for example, Maymyo Mo-kyi, *Myanma Sit-binnya* (Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press, 1963); Nat-mauk Boun-kyaw, *Shei-ke Myanmar Tatmadaw-hmat-mya* (Rangoon: Sarpay Biman, 1965); Myo Myint, “The Literature of War and Tactics in Pre-Colonial Burma: A Study of Two Eighteenth Century Texts”, (BA Thesis: Monash University, 1978).

26. For an account based on English-language newspapers and other reports, which arguably relies on a state-centred framework, see Terence Blackburn, *Executions by the Half Dozen: Pacification of Burma* (New Delhi: APH Publishing, 2011).

in the pre-colonial period between the court and the monastic order and formal, institutionalized Buddhism. In this view, the rebels were fighting to restore that unity.²⁷

But we can find evidence in other kinds of sources that contradict this creative interpretation of the Burmese warriors involved in the 1886–1889 conflict. This campaign in particular affords a unique opportunity for understanding pre-colonial, indigenous warfare. The period of British pacification efforts is special because it is perhaps the only campaign in mainland Southeast Asia in which there is a moment when we have indigenous warfare, but no indigenous court. Thus, there was no royal court to control indigenous depictions of history or to figure at the centre of anyone else's depictions of it. Leaving aside the conscious or unconscious confusion of the terms rebel and bandit in the later decades of colonial rule in Burma discussed above, it would have been difficult for the British of the time to view the Burmese warriors as anything but bandits in the context of Burma's inclusion within the British Raj. Without a royal court to formalize Burmese fighters' status as warriors, those who fought after annexation were necessarily, in British eyes, merely criminals. Had the Burmese won, one or another rural leader would have established a new indigenous court, like Alaunghpaya in 1752. None did and it would take the emergence of nationalist historiography decades later to reinvent the Burmese participants into Burmese nationalists or as Buddhist warriors, contravening colonial historiography.

Read in their own context, the rebels could be said to have represented both the last stand of indigenous warfare as well as an intermediary group in the transition from more traditional forms of warfare and what we might view as modern asymmetrical warfare. There are five chief kinds of sources that help give us a better idea about the rebels, why they were fighting, and the means by which they fought. The first kind of sources includes reports from the engineers, usually civil engineers who were drawn from Rangoon and spoke Burmese. Their main concerns

27. There is also a well-researched analysis of British colonial documents and travel accounts that argues on the basis of quotes in the British sources by pretender princes that they wished to restore order to the religion. See Jordan Carlyle Winfield, "Buddhism and Insurrection in Burma, 1886–1890", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (Series 3) 20.3 (2010): 345–67. The present author suggests instead that in doing so, such leaders were merely mimicking the official proclamations of the court before it fell.

were the embankments and bridges and so on, and local obstacles, such as hostile elements among the indigenous population, were included in the reporting. The second kind of sources were the actual military reports themselves, but the most immediate of this category of reports were those written by the men actually involved in the engagements and who were often lower ranking officers with less time in the military. While they were also subject to the influence of institutional imagination, their reports on the actual targets of armed indigenous bands give some indication of what the hostiles were after, such as the railway line. The third kind of sources consists of the artistic renderings of Burmese rural folk at war, some of which are included in the following section of the present chapter. Certainly, chronicles were subject to the control of the royal court and, with larger political designs in mind, would not typically try to portray anything related to the rural folk. Nevertheless, artistic representations in the newspapers of the time often attempted to portray Burmese rural folk in illustrations. Although very few of such illustrations depicted such rural folk as warriors, those that do deserve our attention as an especially important category of source material. The fourth kind of sources are local family histories from about that time and there appear to be many of them, but only a few have been used in Western historiography. This is largely because as local texts they generally are viewed as being largely irrelevant to the more general national story. The fifth kind of source material is the photograph album. There are many photograph albums on Burma from this period in museums and libraries, as well as in private collections. Many contain photographs that were not staged by official army photographers. Instead, they were on-the-spot photographs often taken by British soldiers themselves. The birth of amateur photography occurred in the middle of the campaign: every officer able to carry a camera had one with him into the field, due to the introduction of the cheap Kodak hand camera with roll-film (1888).²⁸

Reconstructing Local, Rural Warfare

Local indigenous sources indicate that forces fighting the British ran the whole range of characters. There were bona fide brigands who

28. Boris Mollo, *The British Army from Old Army Photographs* (London: National Army Museum 1975): iii.

had fought against the Burmese court, too, and local princes who had been indirectly ruled before the war and who now would not submit to direct British rule. There were also denizens of the court and pretender princes, as well as garrison commanders from the royal army and their men who had not yet surrendered. But the local Burmese sources also make clear that the fighters were made up of entire rural settlements and the fighting was often between one settlement and another.

The best example comes from one of the local family histories mentioned earlier. At some time close to the events, Maung Tha Aung, the youngest brother of Sitke Maung Tun E, wrote a history of the fighting during this period in Upper Burma in Burmese which, not surprisingly, related detailed events about areas close to where he lived and thus focused on the districts around the Toungoo–Mandalay Extension.²⁹ Taking the bulk of the illustrations in *The Graphic* and *The Illustrated London News* at face value, one would believe that most fighting occurred between British and Indian troops on one side, and Burmese dacoits on the other. Burmese were the perpetrators or the victims but they were not the heroes of the conflict. By contrast, in Maung Tha Aung's text, the reader is shown a different war, one in which the British were rarely directly involved and in which the Burmese themselves did the fighting, often settlement against settlement. But from Maung Tha Aung's account, we also learn a great deal about how Burmese rural folk were armed, how they fought, and with whom they fought.

Here we find none of the references to the Sanskrit martial paradigms found and described in the chronicle accounts. The fighting between villagers was as far from the kind of warfare depicted in the chronicles as is possible. Maung Tha Aung is especially detailed about the fighting and the tactics used by his brother, the *sitke* Maung Tun E. The author was a participant in these events and assisted in commanding rural warriors in battles with other rural warriors. In these battles, the brothers divided their warriors into two groups, always keeping one within their settlement's defences and another in a line outside it, or sometimes the second group would be sent out through the back to attack the enemy from the rear. When the brothers won their battles they beheaded the dead leaders and sent the heads off to the British. When the brothers

29. Maung Tha Aung & Maung Mya Din, "The Pacification of Burma: A Vernacular History", *Journal of the Burma Research Society* 31.2 (1941): 80–137.

were afraid of retribution, they bought up the brick kilns in the area and used them as bulwarks around rural settlement defences. Rival rural folk then attempted to ally with rebels to destroy the brothers before the defence works were completed. The brothers foiled the attempt and then attacked the settlement of their rivals. The scale of the fighting was quite large although not technically large enough to meet the “Correlates of War” Project’s threshold of one thousand battle-related deaths to constitute a war separate from the overall Pacification Campaign.³⁰ The largest local, rural engagement in this period that the present author has seen referred to in the documents is one that included a force of seven hundred Burmese who lost two hundred dead in the encounter.³¹

Although small-scale, rural fighting was certainly very violent and bloody. One can easily imagine a heritage of violent conflicts between rural settlements in competition for water, trade, or other resources. One of the main features of the ways in which Burmese in this region waged war locally was the taking of heads. When hostilities broke out, engagements with the Burmese led to Burmese taking the heads of Indian troops and white officers.³² In response, the Indian troops began taking dacoit heads. Although we do not hear much about it now, it was a major issue at the time in both Burma and Britain. Rudyard Kipling even published a poem, “The Grave of the Hundred Dead”, about one Indian company that chased down Burmese “dacoits” and took a hundred heads for a comrade’s head that had been taken.³³ But there were numerous other stories, both fictional and non-fictional and led to the issue being raised several times in the British Parliament. Although orders were given in 1888 banning the Indian Army from taking anymore Burmese heads, the practice reared up from time to time; it would mainly seem out of frustration at the Burmese continuing to engage in the practice themselves against their comrades. This is interesting because there are

30. Joel David Singer & Paul Francis Diehl, *Measuring the Correlates of War* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990): 196.

31. James Alfred Colbeck, “Mandalay in 1885–1888: The Letters of James Alfred Colbeck, Originally Selected and Edited by George H. Colbeck in 1892, Continued”, *SOAS Bulletin of Burma Research* 2.1 (Spring, 2004): 66.

32. *Ibid.*, 53.

33. Rudyard Kipling, *The Collected Poems of Rudyard Kipling*, introduced by R. T. Jones (Ware: Wordsworth Poetry Library, 1994): 59.



Figure 6.1: The taking of cattle as booty (Source: *The Graphic*, 1 March 1890)

similar examples across time as well, for there were moments during which rural tactics again came to the fore in reporting, such as with the taking of the Arakanese ruler Min Ranaun's head in 1494 and the occasions when Alaunghpaya's men did so in his 1752–1756 war with Pegu.³⁴ And, of course, there is the head taking by highlanders in the mainland until well into the twentieth century.³⁵

Another feature of local, rural warfare common in this war and generally found in the region historically was the use of bamboo and brush for the defence of rural settlements. In this kind of warfare, there was little distinction between combatant and non-combatant. As mentioned, *The Graphic* almost exclusively depicted images that portrayed the Burmese who resisted the British as bandits. Even so, on one occasion it published a series of panel illustrations by an indigenous (“native”) artist of the fighting as seen through non-European eyes. This series of panels pro-

34. On the Min Ranaun episode, see Nga Mi, “Rakhine Razawin”, 141b.

35. This is also interesting because of similar experiences elsewhere in Southeast Asia when state forces faced rural fighters. A good example is Luzon, where during the Philippine War from 1898 until 1902, American troops also responded, like the Indian Army, by taking heads, many heads, themselves, leading to complaints back in the United States.



Figure 6.2: The killing of non-combatants (Source: *The Graphic*, 1 March 1890)

vides exceptional visual representations of the kind of fighting that took place, not screened through European military paradigms or forced to conform to Western visual culture or aesthetics. From the perspective of this artist, the fighting was very much like the kind of fighting depicted in Maung Tha Aung's account. First, the artist emphasizes the taking of the defeated settlement's resources (Figure 6.1). Second, the fighting includes the torching and razing of houses (Figure 6.2). Third, the artist emphasizes the torture and killing of non-combatants (Figure 6.3).

Weaponry depicted in the illustrations also deserves our attention. An expected feature, as it is common to mainland Southeast Asia and in the form of the *kris*, the island world, is a bladed weapon, because this would have been used for so many different things in rural society. What is surprising is the ubiquity of firearms. Chronicles and other state sources provide a lot of detail on royal contingents of firearm-bearing troops who specialized in them. We are also told that the court monopolized cannon. We have gotten only a few glimpses though of the spread of firearms amongst rural populations in the region.

The British view was that those "dacoits" who had arms were those remnants of the fallen royal army who were not amongst the many



Figure 6.3: The razing of a rural settlement (Source: *The Graphic*, 1 March 1890)

soldiers who surrendered their arms after the royal court capitulation.³⁶ Nevertheless, one contemporary source in Mandalay reported that “by some mistake” the British allowed five thousand Burmans to walk away with their weapons.³⁷ Unlike the more modern small arms used by the royal army, however, the Burmese “dacoits” were using flintlocks. Two firearms captured in August 1887 and shown to James Alfred Colbeck in Mandalay, for example, were both flintlocks. As he described them,

... one [was] a flint-lock carbine, which we found loaded and crammed with one big bullet and four slugs; the other was an old horse pistol, also flint-lock. Just imagine the Burmans with these rubbishy weapons trying to resist our soldiers with rifled guns and Martini-Henry rifles. Of course, some of the dacoits have better weapons, but hundreds of them have only guns as I have described above, which I should be very sorry to have to fire off, even without bullets. I should think friends would suffer more than enemies.³⁸

36. Ivan Pavlovich Minayeff, *Travels in & Diaries of India and Burma*, translated by S. Bhattacharya (Calcutta: Eastern Trading Company, 1970): 130.

37. Colbeck, “Mandalay in 1885–1888”, 51.

38. *Ibid.*, 72.



Figure 6.4: “Dacoits,” one of whom bears a flintlock, fleeing Indian cavalry
(Source: *The Graphic*, 1 March 1890)

We can confirm the usage of flintlocks in the *The Graphic* panel produced by the indigenous artist as well, for the hammer characteristic of the flintlock is clearly depicted in the image (Figure 6.4).

The ubiquity of flintlocks amongst rural Burmese warriors may in part be due to the fact that flintlocks were easier to copy and to keep in repair, using materials one could find in the locality, than were matchlocks and wheel locks.³⁹

The use of flintlocks raises another question about the circulation of another kind of martial knowledge, gunpowder production. To make use of this kind of firearm, warriors would have had to carry their own powder, in powder horns for example, rather than use cartridges. As a result, they would have had to make their own powder, which would be difficult for any one settlement to do, or purchase it from a supplier,

39. The Russian Pali scholar, Ivan Pavlovich Minayeff who was in Mandalay just after it fell to looting related that British soldiers were complaining that the dacoits “use the kind of guns ... which it is not possible even to use in civilized war”. Minayeff, *Travels in & Diaries of India and Burma*, 171. He gives no further clarification – it is both an enticing and unfortunately incomplete observation.

indicating that there was either an official or black market.⁴⁰ There is also much information on how these flintlocks were used by the time of the 1886–1889 conflict. For example, Burmese took advantage of the jungle foliage for cover. Minayeff reports that British soldiers were unhappy because “it is surprising and intolerable that [the dacoits] should shoot at them from behind the bush.”⁴¹

The use here of such illustrations as well as local sources like the Maung Tha Aung account is only intended to identify a few of the elements that featured in local, rural warfare rather than as an exhaustive examination. Nor is it intended to suggest that these elements of warfare were peculiar to local, rural warfare. As mentioned above, the point is actually the opposite: these elements of fighting were brought by local, rural warriors with them into the larger royal campaigns in which they participated and indeed formed the bulk of the fighting men and for which the only training was the experience such warriors brought with them from their home settlements. Such elements of warfare could be common to both local warfare and larger campaigns where the environmental context was the same. So long as the geographical areas armies moved through had rural settlements built of flammable materials, surrounded by bamboo or other rudimentary stockading, contained people who could be killed or captured, and possessed cattle that could be stolen, the major elements of rural warfare were relevant to and could be applied anywhere. In Southeast Asia, all armies, large and small, trained or not, were subject to the same geographical obstacles, such as wet areas and dry areas (Central Burma), mountains and lowlands, and the availability of the same kinds of materials for making gunpowder, spears, arrows, and walls.

While this discussion has been devoted to the universal application in the region of local, rural warfare, reference should also be directed at warfare of scale which helps to explain the co-existence of another tier of more specialized, powerful, and expensive elements of warfare that did not belong to local, rural warrior culture. The scale of resources at its disposal in terms of revenues and manpower gave the court potential access to an additional range of warfare assets. Artillery was a monopoly

40. If such a market existed, this would be both surprising and exciting as there is nothing about this in the historiography on early modern Burma.

41. *Ibid.*

of the royal court and in Burma at least was very vigorously enforced. Cannon from various sources and times were hoarded in the royal arsenal and brought out for major campaigns. Reportedly this was the case in Burma for the best examples of small arms as well,⁴² but it may also be the case that the availability of older, less effective small arms was widespread.⁴³ Another feature of larger scale warfare or rather a feature that was absent from local, rural warfare was cavalry tactics. Rural settlements did have mounted fighters or warriors who moved about on horses and dismounted to fight, but not cavalry. Cavalry would denote a royal force. Native horses, really ponies, were too small to really be of much use other than affording relatively slow, long-distance travel. This was where the Burmese court had an advantage because it could afford to import foreign mounts that were relatively more agile and larger, just as the invading Indian Army in the 1886–1889 conflict could bring in the cavalry on larger mounts as well. The royal court also had special needs for which these additional military resources were essential. Campaigns against foreign courts required resources so large that only a royal court could afford them and they were fought over issues about which only a royal court could have cared. With the exception of Alaunghpaya, even the most powerful of local, rural warlords would not have considered (or if crazy enough to want to do it, been powerful enough to try) besieging Ayudhya on the other side of the mountains to the east to take the Siamese king's white elephants. And Alaunghpaya did not consider taking up this task until he had reunified the Irrawaddy Valley and made himself King of Burma first. And, in response to such attacks, Ayudhya required special military resources to defend it as well. As one scholar

42. In the late eighteenth century, the Burmese royal arsenal held some twenty thousand firelocks in its magazines that were only released in wartime. Michael Symes, *Account of an Embassy to Ava* (London: John Murray, 1800): 319.

43. Symes, who saw much of Burma during his 1795 embassy to the royal court, provides anecdotal evidence of the possession of shotguns being fairly widespread in Burmese society at the end of the eighteenth century, the limitation being availability of shot, which the average Burman did not know how to make, rather than the availability of shotguns per se. As he observes: "The Burmans, even the common boatmen, are fond of fowling pieces to a degree of childish delight; sooner than not shoot they will fire at sparrows. I never was more importuned than by them for shot, which they do not know how to fabricate." *Ibid.*, 236.

has observed, “Ayutthaya required skilled technicians, new military strategies, and fortifications able to withstand the new artillery.”⁴⁴

In terms of how warfare looked, how it was fought, and how it was understood on the ground, it is necessary to ask if the kind of rural warfare that local warriors brought with them to royal campaigning was complemented by additional resources, technologies, and soldiers supplied by the court. Although the answer to this question is certainly affirmative, this does not argue against the overall thesis of the present examination. For much of the pre-colonial period, the Burmese court isolated certain kinds of military technology to specialists drawn from and formed out of foreign war captives. Captive communities of Portuguese and other Europeans and Eurasians became the hereditary artillerymen of the Burmese court, supplemented for specific campaigns with hired foreign gunners (and not by recruiting and training indigenous gunners).⁴⁵ Other captives, such as captured Mons in the 1740–1756 civil war in Burma, Shans captured in border conflicts afterward, and Manipuris taken in 1759 and after were also formed into units that specialized in certain kinds of weapons or function.⁴⁶ From the last half of the eighteenth century, for example, much of the court’s cavalry were drawn from Manipur, formed into what Europeans referred to as the Cathay Horse. On the other hand, we also see from the late eighteenth century the formation of regular regiments of the royal army, some of them drawn from amongst

44. Florentino Rodao, “The Castillians Discover Siam: Changing Visions and Self-discovery”, *Journal of the Siam Society* 95 (2007): 8.

45. Victor B. Lieberman, *Burmese Administrative Cycles: Anarchy and Conquest, c. 1580–1760* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984): 126; Wil O. Dijk, *Seventeenth-Century Burma and the Dutch East India Company, 1634–1680* (Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2006): 153; Michael W. Charney, “Arakan, Min Yazagyi, and the Portuguese: the Relationship Between the Growth of Arakanese Imperial Power and Portuguese Mercenaries on the Fringe of Mainland Southeast Asia 1517–1617” (Masters thesis, Ohio University, 1993); Rev. Father Sangermano, *A Description of the Burmese Empire the Burmese Empire Compiled Chiefly from Native Documents*, William Tandy (tr.) (Rome: Joseph Salviucci & Son, 1833): 52, 76.

46. Û Tin, *Myan-ma-mìn Ok-chok-pon sa-dàn* (Rangoon: Superintendent, Government Printing and Stationery, Burma. 1931–1933): 3.19; *Burma Gazetteer: Kyaukse District*, vol. A, (Rangoon: Superintendent, Government Printing and Stationery, 1925): 32; J. P. Hardiman (comp.), *Burma Gazetteer: Lower Chindwin District*, Volume A (Rangoon: Superintendent of Government Printing and Stationery, 1912): 156.

Burmans⁴⁷ which assumed roles as musketeers and cavalry as well, allowing the standing army twelve regiments each of cavalry and musketeers.⁴⁸ Such specialized units became the core of the royal army, but although they might be dispatched as the only force sent against one or another rebellion within the kingdom, the larger royal campaigns against other states continued to be formed of a majority of rural warriors.⁴⁹

A key feature of the institutional emergence of the pre-colonial South-east Asian army was a very late and incomplete bifurcation of the royal court's military resources into (1) those represented by the continuity of rural warfare brought to the campaign, forming what in the West would be characterised as irregular forces, and (2) the trained, well-organized, and well-equipped force of military specialists, which, in European military parlance, would have been the standing army or regulars. Nevertheless, it was the irregulars and not the regulars who left a legacy that would be maintained by rural fighters during the colonial period. It might be suggested that the kind of warfare that pervaded rural Burma, the kind that was possible without the resources of the royal court, was the only kind of warfare that could be maintained in the early colonial period, after the fall of most of the pre-colonial royal courts, during which rural folk were similarly on their own. On the other hand, what was remembered of the pre-colonial army by colonial and postcolonial Western scholars and indigenous historians alike has been the tier of royal armies that did not survive: that second force of military specialists, who came to symbolize the greater glories of pre-colonial royal armies.

47. There are detailed lists of the villages from which Burmans were recruited for some regiments. See Û Maung Maung Tin, *Shwei-nàn-thoùn Wa-ha-ya Abhidan* (Rangoon: Buddha Sasana Ahpwe Press, 1975): 209–21.

48. For some references to the formal cavalry regiments, see *Dutiya Maha-ya-zawin-gyi* (Mandalay: n.p., 1919): 354; Skinner (trans.), "The Interrogation of Zeya Suriya Kyaw", 61, 62; Tin, *Myan-ma-mìn Ok-chok-pon sa-dàn*, 4. 265–71.

49. Of the fifty-five thousand men that Hsinpyushin brought to invade Manipur in 1765, only twelve thousand, or about twenty-three percent, were from the standing royal regiments. See William J. Koenig, *The Burmese Polity, 1752–1819: Politics, Administration, and Social Organization in the Early Konbaung Period* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Center for South & Southeast Asian Studies, 1990): 116.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to make several contributions to the literature and to our perspectives on pre-colonial Southeast Asian warfare. First, it has made the case for looking beyond royal chronicles and murals for evidence of how most warriors in the larger polities engaged with war. This is not an easy point to make because royal sources (sometimes called state or central sources in other literature) monopolize so much of the historian's available documentation for the pre-colonial period. Second, this examination has attempted to show how several kinds of sources, often conventionally viewed as colonial, can, in fact, provide insights into what warfare looked like to Southeast Asian rural folk. Third, the present study has attempted to draw out from this effort certain features, including the goals, conduct, and results of local, rural warfare, often misrepresented in Burma through a cloak of illegality as "dacoity". The village "feuds" fought amongst and between the Kachin and Shan in the mid-1910s, such as the fighting between the villages of Lasaw and Hwekum, similarly indicate the continuity of pre-colonial patterns of village warfare seen throughout Burma – lowland and highland – rather than as evidence, as promoted by the colonial government, of the unsavory consequences of indirect rule under the *sawbw* in the highlands (or the lack of colonial control in unadministered tracts).⁵⁰

As this examination has demonstrated, there are sources available to reconstruct local, rural warfare in pre-colonial Burma. The pre-colonial and earlier colonial rural settlement is far from lost to the historian. Subaltern studies and other sub-fields have left us extensive methodologies with which to work. Evidence for elements of pre-colonial warfare in Burma can be drawn from traveller accounts, correspondence, local headman accounts, and even, as has been examined here, from illustrative depictions of fighting during the 1886–1889 period that help us to see something else other than warfare as viewed from the perspective of former royal courts. We see here not just local, rural conflict, but also much of what real warfare at least in this corner of Southeast Asia looked like in the pre-colonial period at what today might be viewed as the platoon level in the context of larger campaigns. In other words,

50. Government of Burma, *Report on the Administration of the Shan and Karenni States for the Year ended the 30th June 1915* (Rangoon: Superintendent of Government Printing, Burma, 1915): 128.

it is in this fleeting glimpse of local conflict in rural Burma that we are provided with an opportunity to move beyond the mental frameworks of the indigenous court and European documentation and, perhaps, to know a pre-colonial mainland Southeast Asian battlefield for the first time.

Asserting, as the present chapter indeed does, that local, rural warfare after the fall of the court provides a significant window through which to view earlier and local-level warfare raises an immediate question. Would this then mean that Burmese warfare did not change on the basis of the lessons learned from the previous three wars with the British (including the short three-week war of November 1885 that preceded the British pacification efforts)? This is where the image of a royal Burmese army falls apart under analysis. We do see real adaptation in the royal army and at the level of the royal court – the huge river bastions built by Italian engineers and the fact that the Burmese court had more river steamboats than the British expeditionary force in 1885 and deployed amongst other things river mines, as well as the more modern firearms supplied to royal troops. All of these aspects of the Burmese military indicate that the court had been sincere in upgrading its military hardware in the 1860s, 1870s, and early 1880s. But what was changing was too small of a sliver, and one tied very closely to the royal centre, to have too much of an effect on the warrior culture of the average Burman. Masses of Burmese warriors might be mustered for war, but the state was reticent or unable to arm, train, or transform most of the combatants fighting on its behalf. The Burmese army remained to the end a small royal standing army in a sea of armed rural folk.

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Military Capability and the State in Southeast Asia's Pacific Rimlands, 1500–1700

Gerrit Knaap

In recent decades, a most intensive debate in historiography has been the one on “the military revolution” in early modern Europe. This deals with the many profound changes in society that coincided with the massive introduction of gunpowder technology in warfare. During recent years, the concept of the “military revolution” has also entered the historiography of Asia, as witnessed by a thought-provoking publication of Peter Lorge, which stresses that parts of Asia were in certain periods on a par or even ahead of Europe. Lorge thus refers to an “Asian military revolution”, although he immediately admits that in each part of the continent variations were taking place. Lorge’s concept of an Asian military revolution is based on military studies that focus on areas where sweeping military changes have occurred. Thus, in some areas it is cavalry, in other areas it is organization, and in regions such as East Asia it is firearms. Southeast Asia, at least the island portion of it, politically and militarily less organized than the great polities of East and South Asia, is portrayed by Lorge as not belonging to the forefront of Asia because it did not widely use gunpowder technology, notwithstanding regional differences in levels and trajectories.¹

In the present chapter, Southeast Asia’s different development in this field of history shall not be questioned. Instead, it looks at what was happening militarily on a number of the islands, more specifically

1. Peter Allan Lorge, *The Asian Military Revolution: From Gunpowder to the Bomb* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008): 3–4, 9–11, 88, 91.

the highly-differentiated island world bordering the Pacific Ocean, that does not fit into the Asian military revolution paradigm. It will consider these islands on their own terms to get a better view of why the sweeping military changes were not occurring here as they did elsewhere. As the discussion about “military revolutions” often revolves around questions of military technology and the ways it is sustained by state and society, this chapter focuses particularly on the relationship between military power, both at land and at sea, and state formation. It deals with the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the time when the Europeans started to move into the region. The analysis begins by outlining the pre-colonial state of affairs in Formosa, present day Taiwan; Luzon and the Visayas, as well as Mindanao, which are now parts of the Philippines; the Moluccas, the Amboina Islands, the Banda Islands, contemporary Indonesia; and, finally, the Timor group, nowadays divided between Indonesia and Timor Leste. It may come as a surprise that Taiwan is portrayed as a part of Southeast Asia in this chapter. However, in terms of culture and ethnicity, early modern Taiwan had much more in common with Southeast Asia than with East Asia, notwithstanding the short distance to mainland China. The chapter will close with some conclusions.

Formosa (Taiwan)

In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, unlike today, Formosa was hardly populated by people of Chinese origin. Insofar as Chinese people were present, they consisted of Fujianese, occasionally fishing along the coasts and exporting deer skin. In earlier centuries, the southwest coast of Formosa had been a landmark for Chinese traders heading for the Spice Islands in the eastern part of what is now Indonesia. In the sixteenth century, it was also an incidental refuge for pirates from China and Japan. But, if Formosa was not yet inhabited by Chinese, who were living there? In the beginning of the early modern period, Formosa was inhabited by some 20 cultural groups, nowadays collectively labeled “aboriginal Formosans”. Linguistically, they were the most northern branch of the Austronesians, the dominant language family of Southeast Asia. Formosa had a surface area of about 36,000 km², almost the same as the present-day Netherlands, from where the island’s first colonizers would originate. In the middle of the seventeenth

century, the total number of aboriginals was estimated to be almost 100,000. The economy of the island was, even in the most fertile areas, largely a matter of self-sufficient subsistence units of swidden agriculturists, fishermen, and hunters.²

Politically speaking, the Formosans were far from united. The population was divided in villages or in shifting alliances, forming at their most complex federations of villages. On average, these villages were about 200 strong, except for certain parts of the southwest of the island where the average was higher. On the scale of state formation, the situation in Formosa might be characterized as a patchwork of village chiefdoms, save for certain parts of the southwest, more particularly in Lonkijouw, a conglomerate of 16 villages ruled by a hereditary lord. In the north, chiefs were called *baqui*, in the west, *ma-achachimit* and *mario-acho*, and, in the southwest, sometimes *honte*. Inter-village warfare, often taking the form of raids, was very much the political reality. Headhunting was a primary, but probably not the only cause of violent conflicts. Those who had been successful in taking heads had a say in local decision-making. Warfare only took place on land, not on the sea, although raiding parties of ten to 30 people sometimes used small craft to carry themselves to enemy territory. In times of a larger conflict, such as fights between several villages, every adult male was supposed to be a warrior. Firearms were not in use; the warriors carried swords, spears, shields, bows and arrows. The fact that gunpowder weapons did not play a role in Formosan warfare may come as a surprise in view of the relative nearness of mainland China, where, according to Lorge, large-scale introduction of such technology had already taken place as early as the fourteenth century. Turning to the settlements of the Formosans, these were not encircled by walls, but often had palisades of bamboo or thorny hedges for their defense. In an encounter with a reasonable number of well-trained and well-armed Europeans or Chinese the Formosans would have been no match. This became clear during the seventeenth century, particularly from 1624 to 1662 when the Dutch gradually occupied the island and,

2. Chiu Hsin-hui, *The Colonial 'Civilizing Process' in Dutch Formosa, 1624–1662* (Leiden: Brill, 2008): 3–5, 16–18; Tonio Andrade, *How Taiwan became Chinese: Dutch, Spanish and Han Colonization in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008): 25, 29–30.

after the defeat of the Dutch, the island's incorporation in the Heavenly Empire.³

Luzon and the Visayas

The northern and central part of the archipelago nowadays called the Philippines covers the areas of Luzon and the Visayas. Their combined surface area measures about 190,000 km², almost half the size of Spain, from 1564 onwards their colonizer. In sixteenth-century Luzon and the Visayas, the population used to live scattered far and wide, sometimes in jungle areas, and was divided in settlements ranging from 50 people to those of 2,000 strong, the lowest numbers being found in mountainous hamlets, which were connected to the coast through trails following rivers or mountain ridges. In the Visayas, the maximum size of a settlement was no more than one thousand people, Cebu excepted. According to Anthony Reid, Luzon and the Visayas might have had a total population of over 500,000. Politically speaking, the situation, as in Formosa, was a patchwork of independent chiefdoms, called *barangay*, each with a chief called *datu* at the head of about 100 families. Despite this small-scale arrangement, the society seems to have been quite stratified. In a few parts of the area, there were also supra-local powers, i.e. village federation-like concentrations or regional alliances. In some places, for instance in Cebu and Bohol in the Visayas and Manila in Luzon, one could even speak of "harbour principalities" of the type seen in other parts of Southeast Asia's island world. In Manila, Islam had gained a foothold in the middle of the sixteenth century, the time when also the Spaniards arrived on the scene. Luzon seems to have been economically a little more "developed" than the Visayas, in the sense that its trade relations with the outside world, i.e. China and Borneo, had a more regular character and its agriculture a somewhat more "advanced" nature, especially where it concerned rice production.⁴

3. L. Blussé, N. Everts, E. French, (eds), *The Formosan Encounter: Notes on Formosa's Aboriginal Society, A Selection of Documents from Dutch Archival Sources*. Volume I: 1623–1635 (Taipei: Shung Ye Museum of Formosan Aborigines, 1999): 5, 9–10, 96–100; Chiu, *Colonial 'Civilizing Process,'* 18–25; Andrade, *How Taiwan became Chinese*, 25–31; Lorge, *Asian Military Revolution*, 66, 69.
4. F. M. Keesing, *The Ethnohistory of Northern Luzon* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962): 16, 21–22, 314–15; F. Landa Jocana, *The Philippines at the Spanish Contact: Some Major Accounts of Early Filipino Society and Culture* (Manila: MCS

The early-seventeenth-century Jesuit Francisco Alcina divided indigenous warfare in Luzon and the Visayas into two types: on land, perpetrated by small bands, much like “highway banditry”, in order to take people by surprise, severing their heads or at best taking them as hostages; and on sea, during raids with large boats, also taking heads and captives as hostages or “slaves”. Thus, even warfare on the sea, which required more organization than that on land, was not primarily oriented at territorial conquest. “Getting people”, in the sense of hostages and/or slaves, seems to have been a primary motivation, particularly in actions on the sea or near the coast; headhunting occurred much more in the mountainous, “tribal” area. As the aforementioned *barangay* also had the meaning of “boat”, William Henry Scott thought that, socially speaking, a *barangay* was in fact a unit of people who built and operated a war vessel, a *caracao*, a large outrigger canoe. On board, oarsmen were indispensable to get the vessel going, but there were also people not using the paddle. They were the real warriors, mainly archers, besides people carrying daggers, swords, spears, lances and shields. Both the oarsmen and the warriors were a sort of “free men” having the obligation to take part, on their own account, in the community’s actions of violence. A few of the political entities above *barangay*-level had sizeable fleets of *caracaos*, some 20 to 30, each mounted with one small piece of artillery, i.e. a swivel gun, probably of Southeast Asian produce. On land, every major polity seems to have had a place of “last resort” or defence, usually on a mountain or hilltop. Narrow passes and trails were in case of emergency blocked by stockades. Incidentally, the places of last resort were true fortifications up to the level of earthworks, stockades and even moats, equipped with some culverins or swivel guns. Among the weaponry, matchlocks were occasionally mentioned. Manila is reported to have had some sort of a gun foundry.⁵

Enterprises, 1975), 3, 10–11, 19–23; B. L. Fenner, *Cebu under the Spanish Flag, 1521–1896: An Economic-Social History* (Cebu City: San Carlos Publications, 1985): 14, 20–21; Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450–1680*, 2.294–95; W. H. Scott, *Barangay: Sixteenth Century Philippine Culture and Society* (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1994), 173–78, 191–92; Idem, *Cracks in the Parchment Curtain and Other Essays in Philippine History* (Quezon City: New Day, 1982): 99–120, 123–26

5. Keesing, *Ethnohistory*, 30, 62, 64, 147, 183, 190, 192, 199, 210–12, 242; V. B. Lopez, *The Mangyans of Mindoro: An Ethnohistory* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1976): 17–18; Scott, *Parchment Curtain*, 3–4, 91; Fenner, *Cebu*,

Mindanao and the Sulu Islands

The large island of Mindanao and the smaller Sulu Islands to the southwest of it form the southern part of what is now the Philippines. Together they have an area of about 127,000 km², approximately the same as Java. Unfortunately, there are no estimates of the population in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. However, considering the estimate for Luzon and the Visayas, mentioned above, there is a good chance that the number of population may have been 250,000 or more. Like the Visayas north of them, Mindanao and the Sulu Islands were areas of agriculturists, fishermen and hunters. There were also trade relations with China and other parts of Southeast Asia. Besides chiefdoms, in Mindanao there existed a sultanate, formally from 1645 onwards, called Tubok or Maguindanao, with a Muslim court from where several “pagan” communities were ruled. Through its *datu*, regional chiefs, the court controlled the relatively well-developed rice-producing area along the Pulangi River. Tribute in rice was a main income for the sultan, who used part of it for export. Jolo, one of the islands of the Sulu Archipelago, was the centre of another Muslim sultanate, since the beginning of the sixteenth century. These sultanates had the character of “harbour principalities”, i.e. “monarchies” ruled by “dynasties”. Information about eighteenth-century Sulu reveals that society was rather stratified, with a ruling class, the *datu*, at the centre and the sultanate possessing juridical, religious, fiscal and territorial rights, up to the point of mobilizing the free villagers for war, not least against the Spaniards in the Visayas.⁶

Dutch information of 1628 about the “kingdom” or *rajaship* of Sarangani on Mindanao’s south coast shows that in case of war, this area could raise 500 able-bodied men – Muslims – as well as two thousand Alfurese from the mountains and 200 Bajaus or “sea gypsies”, both groups “pagans”, armed with bows, arrows and javelins. Together with men from about eight other villages, Sarangani’s force consisted of ten *kora-kora*, outrigger canoes. Dutch sources use the word *kora-kora*, where

22–29; Scott, *Barangay*, 3–4, 193, 231–33; F. N. Rodriguez, “Juan de Salcedo Joins the Native Form of Warfare”, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 46 (2003): 149, 151–53, 155, 157–59.

6. Warren, *The Sulu Zone 1768–1898*, xx–xxv; Laarhoven, *Triumph of Moro Diplomacy*, xiii, xvi, 66–67, 99, 143; Shinzo Hayase, *Mindanao, Ethnohistory beyond Nations: Maguindanao, Sangir, and Bagobo Societies in East Maritime Southeast Asia* (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2007): 19–20, 52.

the Spanish speak of *caracao*. Maguindanao on the west coast was much stronger than Sarangani as it controlled several vassal groups, mostly Iranun, Bajaus and Alfurese. Eventually, Sarangani also became part of Maguindanao. Information about Maguindanao's military capability is scarce, but not as limited as about seventeenth-century Sulu. In 1628, the Sultan of Maguindanao boasted that he was capable to mobilize ten thousand men within a few days. It is known that besides sharp weapons Maguindanao possessed firearms, often bought from Europeans. By 1700, Maguindanao seems to have possessed 300 pieces of artillery. At that time, it was again claimed that in the capital, Simoay, some eight to ten thousand men could be brought under arms. Moreover, the number of *kora-kora* could be up to 500 vessels although that seems rather exaggerated, considering that average crews of *kora-kora* were about 60, which would make the total number of men on board three times as many as Simoay's potential number of warriors. In cases of the regular raiding expeditions to the Visayas or other parts of the Sulu zone, *kora-kora* were equipped with a few swivel guns. A *kapitan laut*, an "admiral of the sea", commanded the forces at sea, while a *kapitan mayores* commanded the sultan's troops on land. Strongholds in Mindanao were usually stockades, although by 1700 two stone forts were recorded in Simoay.⁷

Moluccas

Southeast from Mindanao are the islands of the Moluccas. The connotation "Moluccas" or Maluku has changed much over the centuries. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it referred to Halmahera and the surrounding islands; nowadays this area is equal to the Indonesian province of Maluku Utara, the North Moluccas. The "historical" Moluccas, particularly the five smaller islands west of Halmahera, namely Ternate, Tidore, Motir, Makian and Bacan, were the original area of the world's production of cloves. Long before the arrival of the Europeans, as early as the beginning of the first millennium C.E., cloves were already being transported to other parts of the globe, notably to India, the Middle East, the Mediterranean and China. In China and India, cloves might have arrived even earlier. Consequently, the Moluccas were already

7. Laarhoven, *Triumph*, 27–28, 34–35, 49, 72, 74, 100–01, 109–15, 118, 160–63.

playing a part in the “global economy” at a very early date. This was, however, mainly as “producers” not as “exporters” in the proper sense of the word, as it was not the Moluccans themselves who carried this valuable product abroad. It was the task of other intermediaries to transport the produce in stages all the way to the distant consumption markets.⁸

The fact that the Moluccans themselves were producers rather than exporters meant that their society, economically as well as politically, was not developing at a quick pace. Nevertheless, by the middle of the second millennium, the Moluccas were one of the “pockets of modernity” in the eastern Archipelago. Local state formation had resulted in socio-political constructs, which had long passed the level of chiefdoms and turned into dynastical monarchies. Four of these, namely the ones of Ternate, Tidore, Jailolo and Bacan, used for their rulers the title *kolano*, which probably derived from the Javanese *kalana*, a term for an “overseas king”. Later, the Arabic title of sultan was adopted. The title of sultan came with the introduction of Islam, dating from the second half of the fifteenth century. However, a Moluccan sultanate was not always covering an extensive realm. Only two of the four monarchies just mentioned developed beyond the level of a confederation of villages. These were Ternate and Tidore that possessed elaborate courts ruling over an extensive territory of connections of vassalage, sometimes even beyond the borders of the Moluccas. The land surface of the entire Moluccan archipelago was about 40,000 km², less than half the size of Portugal, whose first sailors reached the Moluccas in 1512. Except for the above-mentioned, small clove-producing islands off the coast of Halmahera, most of the islands were covered with jungle, inhabited by a population of swidden agriculturists and hunters, often called Alfurese, pagans, living in hamlets and villages. Such isolated settlements were nevertheless subject to the sultans. Estimates of the population numbers are problematic. In the case of the seventeenth-century sultanate of Ternate it might have been just over 40,000, while Tidore had probably over 20,000 inhabitants. As far as the military element was concerned, the sultanates’ forces were commanded by a *kapitan laut*. The two sultanates had a small band of professional soldiers, more of a royal guard, probably 100

8. R. A. Donkin, *Between East and West: The Moluccas and the Traffic in Spices up to the Arrival of the Europeans* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2003): 4, 53, 89–93, 111–12, 137, 156, 351–59.

or 200 strong. Their main force, however, was the *hong*i, i.e. the fleet of outrigger vessels called *kora-kora*. According to Adrian Horridge, such vessels had some 60 to 90 men on board, mostly free commoners from the villages, collectively labeled as *bobato* who were liable to service under the command of their own leaders, and used for amphibious actions. So far, there is no systematic information about Moluccan fortifications on land. The weapons carried by Moluccans were swords and shields, spears, pikes, bows and arrows, but hardly small firearms. *Kora-kora* were equipped with a few swivel guns. For seventeenth-century Ternate the potential of a *hong*i was between 30 and 40 *kora-kora*, for Tidore probably about 20. Consequently, the number of combatants must have been almost 3,000 and 1,500, respectively.⁹

Amboina Islands

The Amboina archipelago is the core area of the present-day Indonesian province of Maluku. Although Seram and Buru were the biggest islands of the Amboina group, it was, as in the case of the Moluccas proper, the smaller islands that were what really mattered, in particular Ambon Island and West Seram's peninsula, called Hoamoal. Seram and Buru were largely covered with jungle and inhabited with Alfurese, who led semi-nomadic lives in small settlements, very much the same as in Halmahera or Mindanao. In Seram, the societal regime was characterized by endemic warfare, which in turn was fueled by headhunting practices. In the western part of Seram, the peninsula of Hoamoal excluded, there were nevertheless extra-village networks, centering around three irregularly convened councils, at the rivers of Sopalewa, Eti and Tala, in which attempts were made to appease at least some of the parties involved in perpetual conflict. The leadership of these meetings was, however, rather powerless. Consequently, on the scale of

9. Fr. Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën*. Volume I (Dordrecht, 1724), "Beschryving der Moluccos", 21–22; G. E. Rumphius, "De Ambonsche Historie", volume 1, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 64 (1910): 63, 65; G. A. Horridge, *The Design of Planked Boats in the Moluccas* (Greenwich: National Maritime Museum, 1978): 10; Ch.F. van Fraassen, "Ternate, de Molukken en de Indonesische Archipel; van soa-organisatie en vierdeling: een studie van traditionele samenleving en cultuur in Indonesië" Volume 1 (Ph.D. thesis Leiden University, 1987): 16–18, 32–33, 83–85, 89, 333–44, 353–61; Andaya, *The World of Maluku*, 59–65, 69–71, 83–86, 99–103.

state formation such networks did not really matter. The situation was different elsewhere in the Amboina Islands, especially along the coasts of Seram and Buru and on the small islands. The entire coastal area had become important, in the first instance not because it produced spices or other valuables, but because it functioned as a stepping-stone on the trade routes to the clove-producing Moluccas and nutmeg-producing Banda Islands (discussed below). In the sixteenth century, however, the cultivation of clove also spread to the Amboina region, first to Hoamoal and then to Hitu, the northern part of Ambon Island. The land surface of these islands was about 30,000 km², a little less than the present-day Netherlands.¹⁰

By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the population of the Amboina Islands might be estimated at almost 100,000. Like in the case of the Philippines, the Ambonese lived in settlements numbering between less than 100 and up to 2,000 people, with an average of about 400, usually ruled by *orangkaya*, “wealthy men”. Sometimes, even in Seram’s interior parts, chiefs were addressed, particularly by outsiders, with more grandiose titles, such as *raja* or “king”, suggesting that the chiefs ruled “principalities”, while in fact they were only controlling one or, at the most, a handful of settlements. In Seram’s jungle landscape, warfare was often a matter of bands of headhunters attacking any person they could ambush in the swidden fields or paths outside villages. In contrast to the interior of Seram, coastal society in Amboina had seen a clustering of villages into *uli*, village federations. Such federations were capable of organizing one or two *kora-kora* for amphibious warfare. *Kora-kora* were used for raids, the purpose of which was to provide severed heads as well as captives. The latter might be sold to equal the costs of the expeditions. On land, an *uli* usually had a fortified top of a hill for retreat in case of danger. There were also a few federations of village federations, which had not yet reached the state of a “monarchy” as in the case of Ternate, Tidore, Sulu and Maguindanao. They were

10. G. J. Knaap, “Some Observations on a Thriving Dancing-Party; The Cultivation of and the Competition for Cloves in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Ambon”, in Sartono Kartodirdjo (ed.), *Papers of the Fourth Indonesian-Dutch History Conference*. Volume 1: *Agrarian History* (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1986): 67–69; Idem, “The Saniri Tiga Air (Seram): An Account of its ‘Discovery’ and Interpretation between about 1675 and 1950”, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 149 (1993): 250–56, 269–71.

ruled by a corporate government, consisting of the upper rank of the local elite organized along genealogical lines. The best-known of these “federations of federations” were the aforementioned Hitu, as well as Luhuhu in Hoamoal. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, Hitu had some 10,000 inhabitants. In the second part of the sixteenth century, Hoamoal, Buru, and the islands in between had become part of the Sultanate of Ternate. This area was ruled by “stadholders” or governors, bearing the title of *kimelaha*. At that time, the Ternatan dependencies counted some 30,000 inhabitants, capable of mobilizing a *hong*i of about 30 *kora-kora*. Hitu could launch between seven and ten *kora-kora*. The *kora-kora* were usually equipped with some swivel guns. In the biggest fortifications on land, incidentally, there were small cannon. Ambonese warriors usually carried pointed weapons, shields and javelins. A minority possessed matchlock handguns, probably obtained from the Portuguese, who had entrenched themselves in the southern part of Ambon Island from about 1535. Headhunting or taking people rather than conquest was the core activity of Ambonese warfare, especially in the big island of Seram.¹¹

Banda Islands

Banda had a long tradition as an export economy, because it produced virtually all nutmeg and mace for the world market on its own. Traders from abroad, particularly from Java, used to come and take these products as early as the first millennium C.E. In return, food and other necessities for the islanders were imported from overseas areas. The closest food delivering area was East Seram, at a sailing distance of about 125 kilometers. Because of the monsoons, the trajectory Banda–Seram could not be sailed all year round. Among the areas discussed in this chapter, Banda had the most market-oriented economy. The Banda Islands themselves were a tiny archipelagic group, consisting of six small islands, one of which was just an inhospitable cone of a volcano rising

11. G. J. Knaap, “Headhunting, Carnage and Armed Peace in Amboina 1500–1700”, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 46 (2003): 169–76; idem, *Kruidnagelen en Christenen: De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie en de bevolking van Ambon 1656–1696* (Second imprint, Leiden: KITLV, 2004): 13–15, 17–19, 40, 129, 189.

from the sea. The total surface area of all six islands was no more than about 180 km², which is one quarter of the size of Singapore.¹²

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the number of Banda's population was estimated to be over 10,000. Compared to the areas discussed above this was quite a small number. Population density, on the other hand, was quite high, i.e. about 55 persons per km². The earlier-mentioned areas together had densities of less than ten per km². Banda was home to about 30 settlements, most of them hamlets, under the leadership of *orangkaya*. Seven settlements were considered to be bigger, i.e. real villages. An average settlement must have had about 300 inhabitants. The political situation in late sixteenth-century Banda Islands had not progressed very far on the path of state formation: its settlements were grouped in a few village federations, at least two, which often proved hostile to one another. Consequently, the tiny Banda Archipelago continued to have a highly fragmented political landscape. From an organizational viewpoint, it is clear that it was mainly a matter of chiefdoms. Based on information from early Dutch sources, we might presume that an undivided Banda could have mustered between ten and 15 *kora-kora*, each capable of carrying 60 or more oarsmen and warriors and one or two bronze swivel guns. These *kora-kora* were the "offensive" weapons, the "defensive" being the strongholds on land, mostly located on sloped terrain. The sources mention a handful of such strongholds, all of them probably within a one-hour climb from landing places on the beach. Like their Ambonese neighbours, the Bandanese did not possess a professional soldiery. In principle, every free adult male was a warrior. Unfortunately, we do not know what proportion of the population was non-free, "slaves" so to speak. If we consider this to have been 20 to 25 percent of the population, the number of warriors must have been around 2,000, distributed over a few separate polities. Most of the warriors carried shields, swords and javelins; a few had matchlocks. Among the Bandanese, cannon were very scarce.¹³

12. Donkin, *Between East and West*, 87, 109, 159.

13. J. Keuning, *De tweede schipvaart der Nederlanders naar Oost-Indië onder Jacob Cornelisz van Neck en Wybrant Warwijck 1598–1600*, Volume 4 ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1944): xxx–xxxv [Werken Linschoten Vereeniging 48]; J. Villiers, "Trade and Society in the Banda Islands in the Sixteenth Century", *Modern Asian Studies* 15 (1981): 725–28, 732; Van Fraassen, *Ternate, De Molukken en de Indonesische Archipel* 2.460–62.

Timor and the Solor group

The islands in the eastern part of the Savu Sea, i.e. Timor, including both the Indonesian and Timor Leste halves, as well as Roti, and the range from Solor to Alor located at the most eastern end of nowadays Nusa Tenggara, measure approximately 35,000 km², about the same as the Netherlands. Compared to the Amboina Islands, the Timor area was quite an arid zone. The climate and the prevailing winds also made the island rather inaccessible for maritime contacts with other parts of Southeast Asia during a large part of the year. Nevertheless, traders from abroad were very interested in Timor, because it had for centuries been the world's most important place to obtain white sandalwood. This product must have found its way to India and China already in the first millennium C.E. Traders from outside usually came from Java, sometimes just passing by on their voyage to Banda. Because of the inaccessibility of Timor proper, such traders, including the Portuguese from 1561, used Solor, one of the dry islands at the northern side of the Savu Sea, as the market in between to procure supplies of sandalwood. By 1500, Solor was already inhabited by migrants from other parts of Southeast Asia, which meant that Solor, in contrast to Timor, had a strong maritime orientation. Besides the trade in sandalwood, it exported other local produce, amongst other them beeswax and slaves, the latter basically procured through the continuous warfare that took place in the region.¹⁴

Population numbers for early modern Timor and surrounding islands are difficult to find. Hans Hägerdal concludes that nineteenth-century Timor Island had a population of well below “half a million”. If this is true, the early modern period might have seen 100,000 or at the most 200,000 people. The inhabitants, in fact subsistence farmers and hunters, lived in hamlets and village settlements, with unknown average sizes. In the case of Solor, fences made of palisades and hedges protected the villages. Political centralization was not far progressed, but showed some stratification with a hereditary elite on top. Village leaders were sometimes, at least by outsiders, addressed as *temukung*, a title bearing resemblance to the Javanese *temenggung*. In sixteenth-century Solor,

14. A. de Roever, *De jacht op sandelhout: De VOC en de tweedeling van Timor in de zeventiende eeuw* (Zutphen: Walburg Press, 2002): 36, 41–44, 61, 68–69, 74, 77, 80–83, 103; Donkin, *Between East and West*, 48–50, 54, 161.

Adonara and the eastern part of Flores, five maritime-oriented political units, in fact chiefdoms although often labeled as “principalities” under so-called *sengaj* – another title borrowed from Java – embraced Islam and formed a federation. In Timor Island, the hamlets and villages often combined to chiefdoms, *rajaships* or “principalities”. The number of them is hard to know. They were constantly engaged in inter-village warfare, in which headhunting practices played an important role. Above the average chiefdom, there seems to have been a level of three symbolic ritual leaders, namely the ones of Wehali, Sonbai and Likusaen, having some sort of a political significance. In the seventeenth century, the Europeans frequenting Timor labeled the ruler of Sonba’i an “emperor”, an overlord of “kings”. The political entities in the region, even that of Solor, were not capable of mobilizing substantial “sea power”. Nevertheless, every adult villager was in principle a warrior. It was reported that such warriors used to carry bows, shields and swords, while in Solor some of them, and in Timor a few, possessed muskets. Artillery was absent among the Timorese. Unsurprisingly, warfare was usually a matter of small raiding bands. Yet, in the case of greater coalitions in some parts of the island, a theoretical number of eight to ten thousand able-bodied men were mentioned to be available for recruitment by the end of the seventeenth century. However, in practice, an “army” counted a smaller number of combatants, namely 700 to 800 men in the case of an attacking expeditionary force and two thousand or more in case of the defence of a place nearby home. No permanent fortifications seem to have been in Timor. Once on campaign, the temporary defensive works were at best stockades or constructions made up of stones, bamboo and hedges, usually in sloping terrain.¹⁵

Conclusion

The information provided in this chapter raises the following considerations. First, let us turn to the sea. Despite this being an island world, capability in projecting naval warfare generally was limited. In Formosa

15. H. G. Schulte Nordholt, *The Political System of the Atoni of Timor* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1971): 161–62, 327–28, 345–48; J. J. Fox, *Harvest of the Palm: Ecological Change in Eastern Indonesia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1977): 82; De Roevers, *De jacht op sandelhout*, 75–80, 84–86, 95, 209, 260, 267; Hägerdal, *Lords of the Land, Lords of the Sea*, 22, 37, 52–55, 61–64, 68–69, 108, 113, 117, 122, 209–16.

and the Timor group, “sea power” was almost non-existent. In the other areas, fighting at sea did play a role in the sense that boats for amphibious warfare were used, particularly to raid other coasts. These swift and maneuverable galley-like vessels, often of the type of outrigger canoes – most probably of local design – were well constructed and adapted to the shallow coasts on which they were supposed to operate. They had crews of oarsmen as well as warriors. Neither the oarsmen and nor the warriors were professional mariners. They only served on board for a limited time of the year, in the framework of a maritime “militia duty” to their community and its leadership. They were not paid in money. In these hardly monetized economies, their remuneration could be booty, human heads, or hostages, when the action was successful. Individual warriors sometimes carried firearms, while the vessel itself might be equipped with one or two pieces of light artillery. The caliber of such guns was probably not large enough to sink an enemy vessel. At best, they served to keep an attacking enemy at a distance and hence prevented boarding. Some of the political entities in Visayas, Mindanao, the Moluccas and Amboina had enough of these large oared vessels to speak of “fleets”, capable of an action radius of a few hundred kilometers. Beyond that limit, the galley-like ships lost their value for action. On the longer haul, vessels depending on sail were more appropriate, because of their more efficient carrying capacities of men and supplies.

Turning to the land, armed forces could hardly be called “armies”, because their level of professionalization was not really “advanced” as far as organization, training, and armament were concerned. These forces mainly consisted of warriors rather than paid soldiers. A “noble” or some form of other elite was generally present, and played a role in the organization, but this did not develop into a band of “knights” forming the core of the armed forces. Once again, the warriors were people who served their community and its leaders on a temporary militia basis. Modern army-like specializations such as gunmen and horsemen did not occur. In principle, every warrior was a “foot soldier”. Training, insofar as it took place, was every individual’s responsibility. Here again, the remuneration for serving was booty or, in some cases, heads or captives. Actions on land covered short distances. An armed force only attacked nearby villages or, in case of an amphibious action, a fortified place a few kilometers uphill from a landing point. Artillery was not used in such

cases, because it was too heavy to carry through a rugged and forested landscape. On the other hand, individual warriors might carry a small firearm, a handgun. However, the latter were clearly a small minority in the force. The land forces were generally small, mainly because political entities were still small-scale organizations. Usually, they were no more than a few hundred, but sometimes, during conflicts covering a wider area, up to a few thousand. Fortified places of retreat were usually located on elevated spots, somewhat inland. In principle, such places earned their defensive capabilities from being part of a sloping landscape. This minimized the need for artificial constructions, such as walls of stone and brick as well as stockades. In some of the areas under discussion, the fortified places also had a few pieces of artillery.

Nevertheless, by the seventeenth century, state formation processes were well under way in the regions under discussion, but on different levels, even within the framework of one area. The most basic entity was that of a single village or a cluster of a few villages headed by a chief, with populations numbering a few hundred persons. William Henry Scott would have called these entities “warrior societies”, where class distinctions were to a large extent, but not exclusively, based on prowess in battle. In each area under discussion one or two federations of villages might be noticed, numbering at least 5,000 inhabitants, which in early European sources were labeled as “principalities” or “kingdoms”. Following studies of scholars such as Henri Claessen, we might call these entities “early states” or “proto-states”, with a group of chiefs, and some sort of a hereditary “aristocracy” in charge of the leadership. Besides prowess in battle, wealth and family ties, juridical and organizational skills had become important for the elite to be recognized as an authority. The paramount chief in these early states, often originating from a single lineage, was usually no more than the first among equals. Over time, such a position might develop into a true “monarchy”, with more elaborate differentiations of the political duties at the top. In a few cases, such monarchies, based on patron–client relations with neighbouring political entities, were structured as core-periphery or overlord-vassal states, stretching over vast distances. Oliver Wolters termed them “mandala” networks and Renée Hagesteijn “circles of kings”. The formation of such centralized entities might, amongst other things, have been the result of armed capabilities leading to outright conquest and/or relations

of political protection. Besides providing men for battle and compulsory work, the clients in this system presented tribute to their overlords. The population numbers of these monarchies were at least a few tens of thousands. However, compared with the states elsewhere in Asia, the ones Lorge has in mind, which were often labeled as “gunpowder empires” covering the more urbanized plains of Asia’s mainland, such numbers were not impressive. Compared to the river valleys of East and South Asia, Southeast Asia was simply a low population density area. In the Pacific Rim region, the best examples of overlord-vassal states were Maguindanao and Ternate. Because of the commercialization through overseas trade contacts, they were the most developed “harbour principalities”, a variation on the “riverine coastal state” in the Malay world. Trade, whether export or transit, enabled a surplus to be generated and taxes to be levied. During the course of their development, harbour principalities, whether early state or overlord-vassal state, embraced Islam, with their rulers adopting the title of sultan.¹⁶

Militarily speaking, the Islamic court-like harbour principalities possessed the most extensive apparatuses. Their armed forces, however, were far from “modern” armies or fleets, with “modern” meaning standing forces of specialized units of professionals trained in violence, often using gunpowder devices paid for by a treasury. Nevertheless, echoes of “modernity” were found in these states, for instance Manila’s gun foundry, Ternate’s royal guard, and Maguindanao’s impressive number of artillery. Unsurprisingly, the most developed technology in warfare was to be found in the most advanced state formations. Of course, it was also these state formations that could mobilize the biggest armies or fleets. But in the end, even the armed forces of these most developed political entities, were just conglomerates of bands of warriors or sailors, taking part in war on their own account, by carrying their own weapons amongst other things. The proportion of handguns and numbers of light artillery pieces was such that firearms’ technology was still, to speak in

16. Scott, *Parchment Curtain*, 129, 132–35, 139–41; K. R. Hall, *Maritime Trade and State Development in Early Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1985): 1–3, 9–12; Renée Hagesteijn, *Circles of Kings: Political Dynamics in Early Continental Southeast Asia* (Dordrecht: Foris, 1989): 7–8; H. J. M. Claessen and J. G. Oosten, “Introduction”, in H. J. M. Claessen and J. G. Oosten (eds), *Ideology and the Formation of the Early States* (Leiden: Brill, 1996): 3–7; Wolters, *History, Culture and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives*, 27, 32–34.

Lorge's terms, only a "relative" advantage, not a "decisive" one. Where these firearms were produced, whether inside or outside Southeast Asia's Pacific Rimlands, is often hard to say. It has to be remembered that the Pacific periphery of Southeast Asia was not the home to vast reserves of iron, copper and tin. The fact that so little is known about indigenous gunpowder weapon production is a sign that such production must have been insignificant in the rather small manufacturing sections of the Pacific Rimland economies. By the beginning of the sixteenth century, the weapons nevertheless must have been of Asian origin, but as time progressed European hardware became increasingly important. To this element of lack of "technological quality" should be added the small size of the armed forces of the region mentioned above. Having said this, it is easy to underline Lorge's position with a statement that the Pacific periphery of Southeast Asia was far behind the forefront of the "Asian military revolution". Consequently, when the Portuguese, Spaniards, and Dutch, being experienced representatives of the "European military revolution", appeared on the scene, the Pacific Rimlanders, inhabiting island areas easily accessible from the sea, were among the first in Asia to be subdued. Hence, Victor Lieberman is right in saying, "... from the sixteenth century the sea, which had protected Southeast Asia from sustained attack by external actors, became an avenue for such incursions."¹⁷

17. Lorge, *Asian Military Revolution*, 10; Lieberman, *Strange Parallels*, 2.769.

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Index

- Abdullah, Sayyid 85
 Abidin, Zainal 48
 Aceh War 78, 150
adat 48, 49, 51, 59, 61, 68
 Adonara 196
 Adran, Bishop 117
 Africa 1–4, 7n12, 14, 17
 “Age of Commerce” 5, 73, 134
 Ajjatapparang 47. *See also* Bugis
 Alas Strait 145
 Alaunghpaya, King 164, 168, 172, 177.
 See also Burma
 Alfurese 188–91
 alliances 16–18, 41, 53, 62, 65, 67, 68,
 74, 88, 91–95, 97–99, 104, 108, 145,
 153, 185–86
 Amboina Islands 184, 191–93, 195, 197
 Amurang 85
 An Giang 110
 Andaya, Barbara Watson 15n29, 92n93
 Andaya, Leonard Y. 10, 74, 84
 Ang Chan II, King 32. *See also*
 Cambodia; Siam
 Anglo-Burmese War (Third) 164–65
 Anghthong 42
 Arab traders 87–88
 Arakan/Arakanese 163n15, 164, 172
 area studies 9
 armor 97
 arson 49, 173 (torching)
Arung Matoa 50–51, 54, 57, 59, 61, 68,
Arung Patampulu 51, 67
Arung Tanété La Odang 70
 Attapeu 28
 autonomous history 5, 9
 Ava 11
 Ayudhya. *See* Siam
 Azim ud-Din I, Sultan 79

Babad Buleleng 148
Babad Dalem 134n17, 135, 148

Babad Lombok 138
 Bacan 63, 189–90
 Bach Dang River 105
 Badung 139–41, 144, 150
 Bajaus 188–89
 Balambangan 75, 135, 138, 141–42,
 144–45, 153
 Bali 15, 17, 129–53 *passim*
 Banda 192–95
 Banda Archipelago 184, 192–94
 bandits/banditry 120, 166, 168, 172, 187
 Bandung 149
 Bangkok 21, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31–39, 42,
 45, 102
 Bangli 140
 Banjarmasin 80
 Banten 78n17, 79–80, 83–84, 143
 Barahaman, Sultan 92n94, 97
 Barron, Samuel 117
 Baringeng, Datu 56
 Barrow, John 110n30, 112
 Bassing, Princess 97, 98n125
 Batavia 79–80, 85, 87, 137
 Battambang 28, 33, 42–45
 Belawa 60
 Belich, James 1
 Bénténg, Arung 59–60
 Béttémpola 50–51
 Bijvanck, Willem 130
 Bima 135
 Binh Thuan 123
 Binh Khang 123
 Black, Jeremy 13
 black market 176
 bloodshed 10, 171
 Boer War 165
 Bohol 186
 Boné 47, 52–58, 62–69, 85n55. *See also*
 Bugis
 Borneo 47, 75, 87, 186
 Britain/British 3, 8, 29, 36, 75–76,

- 78, 80, 82, 85–86, 114–15, 144–45,
164–65, 167–76, 181
- Buddhism 6, 46, 160, 168
- Bugis 16, 47–71, 79, 85n55,
- Buleleng 139–41, 145, 148, 149n74,
150–51
- Bungaya Treaty 54, 58, 65, 141
- Burma/Burmans/Burmese 8, 11, 18,
21, 23–26, 32, 34, 37, 42, 44, 139n39,
155–181 *passim*. *See also* Alaunghpaya
- Burma Defence Army 167
- Buru 191–93
- Cakranagara 132
- cakkuridi* 59
- Cambodia/Cambodians 23–25, 27–28,
32, 33–34, 36–45, 102, 120
- cameras 169
- Caroline Islands 76
- castes 133, 143, 153
- cattle 135, 166, 172, 176
- Cathay Horse 178
- cavalry 163, 175, 177–79, 183, 197
- Cebu 186
- Celebes Sea 77,
- Cenrana River 47
- Chachoengsao 39–41
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh 5
- Cham-Malay 44
- Champassak 27–29, 34–36, 45. *See also*
Laos/Laotians
- Chan II, King. *See* Ang Chan II
- Chao Anu 35–37, 45
- Chao Manoi, King 35
- Chao Sa/Chao Sa Revolt 35
- Chao Yo 35–36
- Chao Phraya Bodindecha 36, 38
- Chao Phraya Phra Khlang 40–41
- Chao Phraya River/Basin 46
- Chao Phraya Sriphephat 41
- Charney, Michael W. 12, 18, 128,
139n39
- Cheesman, Nick 166
- Chetsadabodin, Prince 41
- Chiang Kaew 29
- Chiang Khan 36
- Chiang Mai 23
- Chiang Taeng 28
- Chin 166
- China/Chinese 1, 4, 5, 10, 12, 22, 29, 30,
38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 102, 104, 105,
106, 109, 111, 114, 115, 119, 120, 121,
122, 124, 136, 165, 184, 185, 186, 188,
189, 195
- China Trade 75, 80, 111, 115, 119
- Christianity/Christians 78, 80–84
- Chonlabot 28
- chronicles 1, 8, 27, 34, 46, 49, 52, 56–57,
70, 111–112, 120, 130, 133, 135,
139n39, 142, 148, 158–161, 169–70,
173, 180
- babad* genre 130, 134–35, 138–39,
147–48
- Chulalongkorn, King 29
- Cochinchina/Cochinchinese 101–02,
104n11, 106–09, 115, 120–21
- Colbeck, James Alfred 174
- Cold War 4–5
- Communist Bloc 4
- conquest 1–3, 8, 22, 50, 54, 63, 83, 131,
143, 150, 160, 167, 187, 193, 198,
- Cooke, Nola 103
- “Correlates of War” Project 171
- corvée labour 24–26, 40
- court sources 11, 18. *See also* chronicles
- Creese, Helen 131
- Croix, Jean de la 115
- Cu Huan Estuary 123
- Cummings, William 74
- Custer, Lt. General George Armstrong 3
- Da Nang 107n17, 109
- dacoits. *See* bandits
- Dalem Baturenggong 135
- Dalrymple, Alexander 75
- Dao Duy Tu 114
- Dar al-Islam 6
- De Graaf, Hermanus Johannes 130,
- Demak 133, 138
- depopulation 16, 21–5, 34–46, 144
- Dewa Agung 150
- Dien Khanh 117, 121, 123
- Dutch/Dutch East India Company
(VOC) 48, 49, 52, 54–58, 62–63,
65–68, 70, 75–76, 78, 80–97 *pas-
sim*, 108–09, 114, 129–32, 134–35,
137–45, 147–51, 153, 157, 185–86,
188, 194, 200
- Dutch Political Council 83
- Dutton, George 104n9
- elephants 25, 113, 121–22, 124, 160, 177
- Ethical Policy 153
- Europe/European 1–3, 5–6, 8, 11, 12,
48–49, 84, 87, 92, 112, 114–17, 126,
131–32, 136, 139, 144, 146, 151, 156,

Index

- 160, 166, 173, 178–79, 181, 183–85,
189, 196, 198, 200
execution 21, 32–33, 35–36, 59, 102,
110n30,
- family 16, 30, 34, 38, 40, 45, 59, 60,
73–99 *passim*, 102, 114, 122, 141–42,
147, 160, 169, 170, 184, 186 198,
- Fernquest, Jon 12
- firearms
artillery/cannon 10, 49, 64, 87, 93,
102, 105, 108, 112–19, 116n57,
121–23, 125–26, 131, 137, 152,
173, 176–78, 187, 189, 196, 194,
196, 197, 198, 199
flintlocks 110n31, 174–76
foundries 187, 199
gunpowder 2, 12, 50, 65, 114–17,
124, 131, 137, 175, 176, 183, 185,
199–200
harquebus 2
matchlocks 175, 187, 193, 194,
muskets/musketeers 49, 116, 137,
146, 152n82, 179, 196,
- Flores 196
- Formosa/Formosans 116n57, 184–86,
196
- fortifications 65, 97, 112, 117, 132, 152,
164, 178, 187, 191, 193, 196,
- France/French 3, 5, 27, 29, 42–43,
114–17, 130,
- French Indochina 3. *See also* Cambodia;
Laos; Vietnam
- Gallop, Annabel 79, 86
- Garonne 116
- Geertz, Clifford 133n13, 152
- Gelgel 131, 134–135, 138–40, 148,
150–51
- gender 10, 185, 194
- George III, King 76
- Ghosh, Parimal 165
- Gia Dinh 102, 106, 108
- Gianh River 107n17, 108,
- Gianyar 140, 150, 153,
- global history 1, 13
- Gorontalo 81
- Goscha, Christopher E. 12
- Gowa 52–54, 58, 65, 69, 74, 138
- Grabowsky, Volker 23
- Guermontprez, Jean-Francois 148
- Guha, Ranajit 166
- gunpowder. *See* firearms
- Ha Tien 110
- Halmahera 84–85, 189–91
- Hanoi 101–02, 105, 108, 120–21
- harquebus. *See* firearms
- Hassan, Syarif 80
- headhunting/taking of heads 163,
170–71, 172n35, 185, 187, 191–93,
196–97
- Heurnius, Justus 137
- Hindu/Hinduism 130, 137, 142, 148,
164, 183
- historiography 1–19 *passim*, 48, 70–71,
103, 127, 135, 143, 162, 166–69
- Hitu 192
- Hoamoal 191–93,
- Hoang Sa Fleet 108,
- Hoi An 108
- holy war 77–78, 84
- Horridge, Adrian 191
- horses. *See* cavalry
- Hoskins, Janet 158n7
- Hsinpyushin, King 179n49. *See also*
Burma
- Hue (city) 106, 108–09, 113–15,
116n57, 121, 123
- Huong River 109
- Ihsan al-Din, Syekh 79
- Illustrated London News* 165, 170
- illustrations (as sources) 14, 161, 167,
169–70, 172–73, 176
- India/Indians 5, 8, 44, 136, 164, 166,
170–71, 189, 195
- Indian Army 165, 171, 172n35, 177
- Indianization 133, 142, 160
- Indonesia/Indonesian 15, 17, 47–49,
73, 76, 84, 116, 129–31, 135, 146,
150–51, 160, 184, 189, 191, 195,
- Industrial Revolution 3–4
- Iranun 76, 87, 92, 189
- Irrawaddy River 177
- Isandlwana, Battle of (1879) 3. *See also*
Zulus
- Isan (Northeast Siam) 28, 34–35,
37. *See also* Khorat; Khorat Plateau;
Laos; Siam
- Islam 6, 16, 73–99 *passim*
- Italy/Italian 164, 181
- Jacobs, Raja Ismael 91
- Jagaraga 132
- Jailolo 190
- Japan/Japanese 4, 44, 167, 184

- Java/Javanese 14–15, 79, 83, 131–41,
144–45, 147–48, 151–52, 188, 193,
195
Javanization 134, 140, 160, 190, 195–96
Jembrana 140, 144, 150
Jepara 80
jihad 84–85
Jolo 76, 188
- Kachin 166, 180
Kadiri 147
Kaili 55
Kamphut Phakdi, Phra 39
Kantain Village 164
Karangasem, Anglurah Ketut 148
Karangasem 140–43, 145–53
Karen 166
Kartasura 137
Katiandaho, Daniel 93–95, 98
Katiandaho, Salomon 95–96
Keyes, Charles 45
Khanh Hoa 109, 121, 123
Khmer. *See* Cambodia/Cambodians
Khong 28, 34
Khonkaen 28
Khorat 29, 34–36, 45
Khorat Plateau 35–36, 39. *See also* Siam
Khukhan 28
killing 10, 24, 35, 54, 60, 67, 68, 98, 109,
144, 147, 164, 173, 176,
Kipling, Rudyard 171
kinship 16, 73–99 *passim*
Klungkung 140–41, 144, 150–51, 153
Konadu, Kwasi 14
Konbaung Dynasty 167
Kwandang 88
- La Gau 58–61, 68
La Maddukelleng 16, 47–71 *passim*
La Pakka 48, 62, 66
La Passawung 61
La Saléwangeng 51, 56–67
Lan Na 23
labour 8, 15, 21–44 *passim*, 155, 166
Lake Sidénréng 60
Laos/Laotians 22–23, 25, 27–29, 34–36,
40, 42–45. *See also* Champassak; Siam;
Vientiane
Latin America 4
Le Van Khoi revolt 37
Le-Trinh. *See* Trinh
Li Tai 119
Li Tana 103, 116n57
- libraries 160, 169
Lieberman, Victor B. 11, 128, 134, 200
Lima Ajattappareng 60
Little Bighorn, Battle of (1876) 3
local warfare/warriors. *See* village war-
fare/warriors
Lombok 131–32, 135, 137–38, 141–47,
149–51
Long Xuyen 110
Lonkjouw 185
Lontaraq Sukkuqna Wajoq (Complete
Chronicle of Wajoq) 49, 54, 56, 57,
66, 70. *See also* Wajoq
Lopburi 42
Luang Phrabang 36
Luang Udomsombat 41
Luli, Prince 89, 91
Luoc River 121
Luwuq 47, 52, 69. *See also* Bugis
Luzon 172n35, 184, 186–88
- Mac Dang Dung 102
Mac Dynasty 108
Madagascar 3
Madura/Madurese 132
Maguindanao/Maguindanaos 16, 73–99
passim, 188–89, 192, 199
Majapahit 129, 133–34, 141
Majid Mindanawi, Abdul 78
Majul, Cesar 77
Makassar 55, 57–58, 62–63, 80, 85, 136,
138–43, 151
Makassar War 54, 57, 141–42
Makian 189
Malacca, Straits of 88
Malang 141
Malik, Abdul 82
Maluku 18, 75, 83, 85, 86, 88, 95–96,
99, 189
Maluku Utara 189, 191
Malurang 89–91, 93–95
Mampu, Arung 63–64
Manado 78, 85, 95
Mandalay 165–66, 170, 174, 175n39. *See
also* Burma
Mandar 55
Manganitu 16, 93–97
Manguin, Pierre-Yves 104
Manipur 178
manpower 18, 22, 24–29, 32–33, 38, 42,
43, 65, 108
control 8, 22–23, 27, 34, 35, 39, 152,
176

Index

- Mansur, Syarif 78
 Mantienne, Frédéric 127
 Mao Zedong 4–5
 Marapati 78, 80
 martial races 8, 166
 Mataram 135–36, 138, 140, 142, 146–47, 151
 Maung Tha Aung 170, 173, 176
 Maung Tun E 170
 Mei, Queen 33
 Mekong Delta 109, 122
 Mekong River 21–22, 24, 36, 45–46, 120, 122
 Mengwi 140–41, 144, 146, 148, 150–51, 153
 methodology 7, 162, 180
 Middle East 4–5, 189
 Min Ranaun 172
 Minayeff, Ivan Pavlovich 175n39, 176
 Mindanao 78–79, 93n100, 184, 188–89, 191
 Minh Mang, Emperor 33, 37
 Minh Ha Pham, Charlotte 103
 Mojong 60–61
 Moluccas. *See* Maluku
 Mountbatten, Lord Louis 7
 Motir 189
 Mrauk-U 164
 Mukdahan 37
 Murray, Dian 104n9
 museums 169

 Nakhon Chaisi 39–41
 Nakhon Phanom 37
 Nakhon Ratchasima 27, 45
 Nanding, Princess 91, 93–95
 negotiation 58, 62, 76, 95,
 Ness, Gayl D. 3
 New Zealand Wars 1
 Nga Mei 164
 Nguyen 17, 33, 101–28 *passim*
 Nguyen Hue 102, 119–20, 122
 Nguyen Huu Chinh 101, 119, 126
 Nguyen Lu 102, 122
 Nguyen Phuc Anh 101–04, 106, 109–13, 115–16, 119–26, 128
 Nguyen Veritable Records (*Dai Nam Thuc Luc*) 109, 112
 Nha Trang 103, 106, 119
 Nhat Le 108
 non-combatants 173
 Nong Chronicle 27
 Nongkhai 36

 Nonthaburi 42
 Noorduyn, J. 48
 North Africa 3
 North Atlantic 1
 Nuku, Prince 86

 Orangkaya 192, 194
 Orientalism 8
 Oudong 32–33

 Pacific Ocean 184
 Pacific Rimlands 18, 183–200 *passim*
 Pacification Campaign 18, 155–81 *passim*
 Pagaruyung 140
 Pagesangan 142, 147
 Pagutan 142, 147,
 Pahar ud-Din, Sultan 94, 97, 98n125
 Pahawuateng 93–95, 98
 Palaba 132
 Palakka, Arung 54n12, 57, 67
 Pamaree Surakiat 11
 Pambencangah Dane Poleng 142
 Pammana 58–62
 Pampanga 82
 Parker, Geoffrey 1
 Pénéki War 16, 47–71 *passim*
 Petta Emmengng 51
 Petta Pilla 51
 Petta Wajoq 51
 Philippines 16, 73–99 *passim*, 107, 165, 184, 186–89, 192
 Phitsanulok 27
 Phnom Penh 33, 37–38, 42–44
 Phongsawadan Huamuang Monthon Isan (The History of the Northeast) 28, 34–35
 photography 169
 photographs as sources 162, 169
 Phraya Chodoc Ratchasetthi 41
 Phraya Sombatwanit 41
 Phraya Ratchamontri 41
 Phraya Ratchasuphawadi 36
 Phu Quoc 110
 Phu Yen 109, 121, 124
 Phun Wiang (History of Vientiane) 34–35
 Phutthaisong 28
 Pilla La Gau 58–61, 68
 Pinto, Mendes' *Peregrination* 6, 133
 pirates/piracy 85, 87, 103–04, 119–22, 124, 184
 Pires, Tomé's *Suma Oriental* 133
 Po Binasor 106
 Popkin, Samuel 155

- population 15–17, 21–47, 56–57, 59–61,
 67, 106, 112, 136, 138, 144, 163, 165,
 169, 173, 185–86, 188, 190, 192,
 194–95, 198–99
 Porter, Patrick 8
 Portugal/Portuguese 11, 111, 114, 116,
 131, 136, 157, 178, 190, 193, 195, 200
 Praya 146
 punishment 58, 61, 67, 69, 157n5, 161
 Pura Besakih temple 153
 Pyinmana 165

 Qahhar al-Bantani, Abdul 79
 Quang Binh 102–03, 106, 119, 124
 Quang Hoa 108
 Quang Ngai 108
 Quaritch-Wales, H. G. 7–10
 Qing Dynasty 115, 119, 121, 124
 Quy Nhon 102, 109, 115, 120–25

 Rach Gam 120
 Raffles, Stamford 136
 Rahman, Abdul 79
 raiding 16–17, 29–37, 73–99 *passim*,
 105, 122, 133, 145, 149, 151, 185, 187,
 189, 192, 196–97
 railways 165, 169
 Rama I, King 27–28
 Rama II, King 26, 30, 32
 Rama III, King 23, 29, 34–36, 38, 40–41,
 45
 Rangoon 165, 168
 Ratchaburi 39
 rebellion 28–29, 32–33, 35, 66, 84, 102,
 104, 115, 119–120, 134, 136, 139,
 142–43, 145, 165–68, 171, 179,
 records 11, 14, 27, 46, 58, 75, 89, 90–91,
 106, 109, 111–12, 115, 117, 125, 156,
 158, 160–61
 Red River 101, 109, 120, 127
 Reid, Anthony 5, 10, 73, 83, 134, 155, 186
 Reid, Richard 7n12
 revenue inquests 156
 Riau 87, 99
 Ricklefs, M.C. 11
 Rigg, Jonathan 155n2, 156
 Robuste 116
 royal edicts 156, 161
 Rucha Decho, Khun 39,
 rural warfare/warriors. *See* village war-
 fare/warriors
 Saenpang 28

 Saint-Jacques (Vung Tau) 116
 Sakra 146
 Sakti, Gusti Agung 148
 Salawo 89–94, 98
 saltpeter 110, 115, 117
 Sangir Archipelago 80, 84, 88–99
 Sangkha 28
 Sanskrit military influences 8, 161, 167
 Sapad 28
 Saraburi 36, 42
 Sarangani 188–89
 Saravane 28
 Sasak 142–43, 145–46
 Sautijn, Governor Johan 55
 Savu Sea 195
 Sawitto 54
 Schulte Nordholt, Henk 130, 149, 153
 Scott, James 11
 Scott, William Henry 187, 198
 Sea Falcons 101–28 *passim*
The Secret Art of War 114
 Sékkanasu 59–60
 Selaparang 141–42, 145
 Sengkongo 142, 147
 Seram 191–93
 Seran 145
 Shan 166, 178, 180
 ships and shipbuilding 3, 30, 33, 39, 41,
 49, 55–56, 64, 75n8, 85, 90, 93, 95–96,
 101–28 *passim*, 144, 187–89, 191–94,
 197
 Siam 4, 16, 21–46, 102–03, 107, 110,
 115–16, 119–20, 177. *See also* Isan;
 Khorat Plateau
 Siam, Gulf of 103, 107, 110, 122
 Siau 80, 89–91, 93–96
 Sidénréng 47, 58–61. *See also* Bugis
 Siemreap 28, 42–43, 45
 Simoay 189
 Singapore 39, 149–50, 194
 Singhasari 142, 146–47
 Sisaket 28
 Sithandon 28
 slaves/slavery/slave taking 28, 45, 67,
 73, 81–83, 91, 132, 135, 137, 140–41,
 143, 149, 187, 194–95
 Smail, John 5, 9
 Sokong 132
 Solor 195–96
 Sonba'i 140
 Soppéng 47, 53, 57, 67–69, 79. *See also*
 Bugis
 South China Sea 103, 107, 112

- Spain/Spanish 77, 80–81, 95, 122, 157, 186, 189
 Speelman, Admiral Cornelis 49
 Stahl, William 3
 states and statecraft 2, 3, 11, 15, 22, 27, 45, 51, 73–74, 88, 107, 109, 126–28, 139, 149, 152n84, 152–53, 157, 160, 163–66, 184–85, 190, 192, 194, 195, 198–99
 sugar/sugarcane/sugar industry 30, 39–41
 Sukawati 140
 Sulawesi
 North 75, 77–78, 81, 85, 87–88, 96
 South 11, 16, 47–71 *passim*, 74, 136–37
 Sulu Islands 18, 73, 75–84, 88, 91–92, 188–89, 192
 Sulu Zone 189
 Sulug, Timbang 91–92
 Sumatra 83, 140
 Sumbawa/Sumbawans 64, 131, 135, 138, 141–43, 145–46
 Sumeru 141
 Sun Laichen 12, 128
 Sunait Chutintaranond 160
 supernatural forces/magic 35, 142, 148, 149n71
 Suphanburi 42
 Surapati 132, 137
 Surin 28
 surrender 59, 66, 90, 170, 174
 Syahrial, sultan Kibad 85–86, 90

 Ta, Arung 63–64
 Tabanan 140, 150
 Tabukan 93–94, 97
 Tack, François 137
 Taiwan. *See* Formosa
 Taksin, King 26–28
 Talaud Archipelago 76, 95, 97–98
 Talloq 52
 Talotenreng 50
 Tamako 96
 Tanjung Pinang 87
 Tap Dinh 119
 Tarsila (genealogical records) 89
 Tayson/Tayson Rebellion 28, 33, 102–06, 109, 113, 115–27 *passim*. *See also* Vietnam
 Tayson Brothers 101–02, 115, 122
 Tellumpocco 53, 56–57, 62, 66–69, Têmpé 56

 Ternate 81–83, 85–87, 89, 91, 95, 189–93, 199
 territory 29, 34, 36, 38, 44, 53, 102, 109, 144–45, 185, 190
 Thailand. *See* Siam
 Thang Long. *See* Hanoi
 Thepphromma, Khun 39
 Thi Nai, Battle of 107n17, 109, 116, 120–123, 125, 127
 Thonburi 22–23, 26–30, 39, 45
 Tidore 86, 96, 189–92
 Timor 64, 138, 140, 184, 195–97
 Timor Leste 184
 Timurung, Treaty of (1582) 53–54, 56, 67
 Toli-toli 88
 Tombelo 78, 80–81
 Tonkin, Gulf of 103, 120
 tortoiseshell 84
 toSibengngareng 56
 Tosora 56, 58
 Toungoo 165, 170
 Tran Bien 111
 Tran Dinh 111
 Trans-Mekong Basin 21–46, 115
 treaties 16, 29, 49, 53–54, 58, 65, 67, 70, 90, 95, 141,
 tribute 45, 188, 199
 Trinh 101–02, 108, 114–17, 120–21
 Trinh-Nguyen War (1627–1672) 108
 Trunajaya Rebellion 142
 Tua 50

 Ubon 28, 35
 Ujung Pandang 57. *See also* Makassar
 Umar, Prince Haji 85–87, 96
 United States 172n35

 Van Delden, A. J. 90,
 Van Leur, Jacob Cornelis 9
 Vickers, Adrian 131, 150
 Vientiane 27, 34–38, 45. *See also* Laos/
 Laotians; *Phun Wiang*
 Vietnam 1, 5, 17, 24–25, 28, 33–34, 36–38, 42–44, 101–28 *passim*, 160
 village warfare/warriors 18, 47, 155–81 *passim*, 185, 196
 Visayas 184, 186–89, 197
 visual culture 129, 173
 VOC. *See* Dutch

 Wajoq 15, 47–71 *passim*. *See also* Bugis;
 Lontaraq Sukkuqna Wajoq

- Wang Yaer 120
war booty 163, 172, 197
Warren, James 73, 76, 84
weapons
 blowpipes 131–32, 137, 151
 bows and arrows 185, 191
 daggers 132, 187
javelins 188, 193–94
 kris 137, 151, 173
 lances 131–32, 136–37, 151, 187
 spears 3, 176, 185, 187, 191,
swords 185, 187, 191, 194, 196
see also firearms
- Wellen, Kathryn 16, 17, 92n93, 128,
 157n6
Wheeler, Charles 103
Whitmore, John K. 12
women 64–65, 135, 157n5
- Xoai Mut 120
Yamethin 165
Yap Island 76
Yueh Nan 120
- Zulus 3, 165